LETTERS AND ESSAYS,

MORAL, AND MISCELLANEOUS.

BY

MARY HAYS.

True felicity is not to be derived from external poſſeſſions, but from wiſdom; which conſiſts in the knowledge, and practice of virtue.

SOCRATES.

Yet all beneath th' unrivall'd roſe
The lonely daiſy ſweetly blows.
Though large the foreſt monarch throws
His army ſhade,
Yet green the juicy hawthorn grows
Adown the glade.

BURN'S POEMS.

London:

PRINTED FOR T. KNOTT, NO. 47, LOMBARD-STREET.

M DCC XCIII.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

THE REV. JOHN DISNEY, D. D.

AS AN

UNAFFECTED TRIBUTE OF ESTEEM,

FOR DISTINGUISHED WORTH,

AND

GENUINE LIBERALITY OF MIND,

THE FOLLOWING WORK

IS RESPECTFULLY

INSCRIBED,

BY THE

AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE following papers might, perhaps, with greater propriety have been entitled ſketches, than eſſays; as they are rather hints and outlines, than complete and finiſhed pieces.

It is obſerved by the ſenſible vindicator of female rights—"that as ſociety is at "preſent conſtituted, the little knowledge, "which even women of ſtronger minds "attain, is of too deſultory a nature, and "purſued in too ſecondary a manner to "give vigour to the faculties, or clearneſs "to the judgment." I feel the truth of this obſervation with a mixture of indignation and regret: and this is the only apology I

ſhall make to the critical reader, who may be inclined to cenſure as unconnected, or inconclufive, any of the ſubſequent remarks. Impreſſed with ſentiments of the ſincereſt reverence and eſteem for the author of a work, in which every page is irradiated by truth and genius, I cannot mention the admirable advocate for the rights of woman (rights founded in nature, reaſon, and juſtice, though ſo long degraded and ſunk in frivolity and voluptuous refinement,) without pauſing to pay a tribute of public reſpect in the name of my ſex, I will ſay, of grateful reſpect, to the virtue and talents of a writer, who with equal courage and ability hath endeavoured to reſcue the female mind from thoſe prejudices, by which it has been ſyſtematically weakened, and which have been the canker of genuine virtue; for purity of heart can only be the reſult of knowledge and reflection.

By

By degrading the female character, and by repreſſing the wiſh for improvement, men have, with a narrow and temporary policy, been enemies, not only to their own happineſs, but to their offspring: for the follies of the parents are often literally viſited upon the children to the third and fourth generation. When will human beings be wiſe enough to ſee their true intereſt? When will they drop the ſemblance, and ſeek the ſubſtance? While light ſtreams all around them, they veil their faces, and ſtumble in darkneſs. Moral precepts have been ſo warped and confuſed, that it requires a clear and a ſtrong head to diſentangle them: ſeeming, through all the intercourſes of poliſhed life, has been ſubſtituted for ſubſtantial virtue: were principles inculcated, inſtead of rules for behaviour, ſuch degrading maxims would be unneceſſary.—What effect will my conduct produce? (and not—of what utility will it be?)

be?) is the anxious inquiry of the generality of men, as well as women; while the ſelfiſh coxcomb, and the fine lady equally ſacrifice all the graceful ſenſibilities of the heart to the paltry ambition of living in a certain ſtyle: for too true is the obſervation—That the want of domeſtic taſte, and not the acquirement of knowledge, is the moſt likely to take women out of their families. A reformation of manners is ſurely wanting; the fountain is poiſoned at its ſource: ſenſible and virtuous individuals vainly ſtruggle againſt the ſtream, which continues to draw down the majority with deſtructive force. Yet the ſpirit is gone abroad, firſt principles are on every ſubject reverted to, and cauſes muſt eventually produce their effects.

If by ſeeing ſome common truths placed in an intereſting point of view, any young minds ſhould be incited to mental, or moral improvement,

improvement, the end for which this little work was deſigned will be anſwered; and the author will have the ſatisfaction of reflecting that ſhe has not entirely waſted the Maſter's talent: if only one talent has been given, the improvement of that one only will be required in the day of final retribution!

It is in the cauſe of what the writer conceives to be truth and virtue, that ſhe has taken up the pen: every endeavour towards meliorating the human mind—how weak, or imperfect ſoever—muſt be acceptable in the ſight of that Being whoſe nature is pure benevolence, and "no effort "will be loſt."

The Fragment in the manner of the old Romances, the Eaſtern Tale, and the Poems, were written at an early period of life, as exerciſes of fancy.—The Invocation to the Nightingale has been inſerted in Harriſon's Collection

Collection of Britiſh Poetry.—The Ode to a Bullfinch, one of the Sonnets, and the Eaſtern Tale, in the Univerſal Magazine.

The two Moral Tales ſigned E. H. exemplifying the miſery attending unſuitable connections, and the pernicious effects of early indulgence, are the productions of a younger Siſter.

CONTENTS.

CONTENTS.

Page

I. *LETTER to Mr. —— on the Meliorating and Beneficial Effects of Pulpit Elocution* 1

II. *Thoughts on Civil Liberty*..... 10

III. *On the Influence of Authority and Cuſtom on the Female Mind and Manners*..... 19

IV. *Letter to Mrs. —— with a Sketch of the Family of Sempronia. Hiſtory of Melville and Serena*..... 31

V. *Letter to the ſame in continuation.— The Story of Melville and Cecilia* 42

VI. *Letter to Miſs Elizabeth. With an Account of the younger Daughters of Sempronia, Martha, Ann, and Charlotte*..... 67

VII. *Letter to Mrs. —— on reading Romances, &c.*..... 86

VIII. *Letter to the ſame—with Henrietta, a Tale*..... 101

IX. *Letter*

IX. *Letter to Amaſia—with a Sketch of the Characters of Hortenſius and Hortenſia* 116
X. *Cleora, or the Miſery attending unſuitable Connections. By E. H.* 124
XI. *Joſepha, or the pernicious Effects of Early Indulgence. By E. H.* 138
XII. *Letter to Amaſia, on Materialiſm and Neceſſity* 159
XIII. *Letter to Mr. —— on Materialiſm and Neceſſity* 171
XIV. *Remarks on Converſation and Friendſhip* 192
XV. *Letter to Amaſia, on a future State* 201
XVI. *Letter to the ſame, on Human Nature* 208
XVII. *A Fragment, in the Manner of the old Romances* 212
XVIII. *Zeibriel the Hermit—an Eaſtern Tale* 219
XIX. *An Invocation to the Nightingale* 253
XX. *A Sonnet* 256
XXI. *A Sonnet* 257
XXII. *Ode to a Bullfinch* 258

LETTERS

LETTERS AND ESSAYS.

No. I.

To Mr. ——.

I Thank you, my friend, for the remarks with which you have favoured me, on the Wakefieldian controverſy; the queſtion is I conceive of ſome importance, and will I have no doubt be ultimately beneficial; received opinions ought to be brought to the teſt, as in this ſtate of imperfection there is ſcarcely any thing which will not admit of, nay, does not call for, emendation.

Without adopting Mr. WAKEFIELD's ideas, you tell me, you yet feel your mind in

ſome degree affected by them, and that you are ſtruck more eſpecially with his ridicule of the oſtentation attending public expreſſions of devotion, and pulpit oratory*. What Mr. W. writes on this ſubject, reminds me of an anecdote related in Enfield's Hiſtory of Philoſophy. Antiſthenes, the founder of the Cynic ſect, uſed to attend frequently on the lectures of Socrates, and in order to ſhew his contempt of Athenian refinement was generally attired in a ragged cloak, which inſtead of attempting to conceal, he took great pains to bring forward to notice; Socrates, who underſtood the human heart, obſerving this affectation, aſked him if he were not aſhamed to diſplay his vanity through his rags! And ſurely in informing the world that we are too wiſe to be inſtructed, and that we contemn all that mankind has agreed to reverence; there is a far greater degree of pride, and vain-

* "I am further of opinion, that the cuſtom of looking for inſtruction to one only a pulpit exhibitioner (ſarcaſtically writes Mr. WAKEFIELD in his general reply) is of a very dangerous tendency, and obſtructive to the furtherance of the goſpel."

glory,

glory, than in uniting with our fellow-creatures in a cuſtom (I am not contending about the propriety of it) which has long been ſo invariably practiſed in all countries, and by all nations, that no one dreams of arrogating to himſelf any ſuperior degree of piety in falling in with the general practice of his neighbours.

We will admit that in exhortations from the pulpit, the effect is conſidered as well as the utility; and what author compoſes a work with the pure intention of benefiting the world, free from all ſelfiſh motives? Does any one pretend to do ſo? or if they did, ſhould we give them credit? On the contrary, the love of fame is a preſage of immortality, and ever glows in a noble mind. Hero's, legiſlators, and ſages, the firſt, and the wiſeſt of men, have all bowed at its ſhrine, and courted its rewards. "Can it "be reaſonable (ſays the author of Fitz-"oſborne's Letters) to extinguiſh a paſſion "which nature has univerſally lighted up "in the human breaſt, and which we con-"ſtantly find to burn with the moſt ſtrength

" and brightneſs in the moſt elevated and " beſt formed boſoms?" To be " exalted " with honour," and to be had " in ever- " laſting remembrance," are encouragements from revelation; and the mother of the Meſſiah is repreſented as rejoicing, that " all generations ſhall call her bleſſed." We are not required to annihilate our paſſions, but only to keep them in ſubordination; for ſo mingled are the qualities of the human mind, that was it poſſible to prune off every exuberance, you would deſtroy the energy from whence ariſes its excellence. It has been obſerved, " that in " all hot climates flowers and weeds ſhoot " up to an enormous growth; in colder " countries, where poiſon can ſcarcely be " feared, perfumes are ſeldom boaſted." Where there is A, B, C, (ſays Lavater) you will generally find D, E, F; let the wheat, and the tares then grow together, till they are ſeparated at the day of harveſt. Who does not perceive that the wit and genius of the contemner of ſocial worſhip, ariſes out of the ſame exquiſite nervous irrita-

bility

bility that makes him (like the ſenſitive plant, ſenſible to the ſlighteſt touch) return full meaſure, and running over, to every one who dares venture the leaſt degree of perſonal recrimination?

But leaving theſe apologies for human nature, which produces no "faultleſs monſters"—Eloquence is aſſuredly never ſo well employed, as in alluring men from their vices, and bringing over the affections to the ſide of virtue. For one perſon who reforms his errors from the cool conviction of his reaſon, ninety-nine are acceſſible only to what affects the ſenſes, and touches the heart. And a piety ariſing out of ſenſibility, in minds who have neither leiſure nor capacity to purſue an abſtract chain of ratiocination, may yet have all the meliorating effects that ſweeten ſocial intercourſe, and amend the life. This is exemplified in the beautiful ſtory of La-Roche, related in the Mirror, which an infidel of taſte could not read, and be unmoved. "* A man

* Fitzoſborne's Letters.

" muſt have a very uncommon ſeverity of " temper indeed, who can find any thing " to condemn in adding charms to truth, " and gaining the heart by captivating the " ear, in uniting roſes with the thorns, " and joining pleaſure with inſtruction." Hiſtory atteſts in every page the powers of oratory; in Athens, in Rome, in France, in England, and in every civilized ſtate you behold its effects. For though the faſtidious, and philological critic, familiariſed with beauty, till beauty ceaſes to charm, may turn away ſatiated from the rhetorical and poliſhed period, it will ſtill produce its effect on the majority, and the morals of the majority conſtitute the welfare, or the miſery of a ſtate. I own I feel my heart gladdened when I contemplate a numerous auditory liſtening with delight to a popular preacher, who in inſinuating language, chaſtened with becoming dignity, paints the ways of piety as ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths as peace. Every impreſſion reaches the brain through the medium of the ſenſes, and from repetition, and aſſociation, flows down into the actions and conduct. Let us not by

frigid

frigid criticiſm refine away all our pleaſures; to thoſe who tell me the orator in diſplaying his abilities is ſeeking his own gratification, I anſwer, he ſeeks it in the recommendation of virtue, he employs his talents for the beſt purpoſes, he diffuſes the ſatisfaction he feels, and we rejoice that it is reflected back to his own boſom! Let him enjoy it, it increaſes the ſtimulus to excellence; and ſo ſympathetic are our feelings, that in labouring to excite others to goodneſs, it is ſcarcely poſſible but the divine energy will in ſome meaſure be generated in our own hearts. Indeed, genuine pulpit eloquence muſt be the reſult of pious affections, and benevolent zeal. No orator can affect his audience, who does not feel himſelf; tame cold declamation, upon a ſubject in which the ſpeaker is not intereſted, will never awaken the ſenſibility of the hearers. People of any taſte can eaſily diſtinguiſh between frothy ebullitions of the head, delivered with theatrical affectation, and the energetic language of ſerioufneſs and integrity. How are we to judge of cauſes, but from their effects? And that beneficial effects to ſociety (notwithſtanding all the deductions which may

be made) have been produced by public exhortations of this nature, no one, I believe, will pretend to diſpute. You will excuſe me if I ſpeak with warmth on this ſubject? I confeſs myſelf peculiarly alive to the charms of eloquence. May the faſtidiouſneſs of criticiſm never deprive me of this innocent (I will ſay) laudable, intellectual gratification! I can never forget the pleaſure with which I have attended to the diſcourſes of my late valued friend Mr. Robert Robinſon of Cambridge. "When he ſpoke—

"The air, a charter'd libertine, was ſtill;
"And the mute wonder lurked in men's ears,
"To ſteal his ſweet, and honied ſentences."

Suppoſe a young mind, from early diſappointment, ſunk into a ſtate of gloomy deſpondency, and awakened to delight, to improvement, to the purſuit of religious conſolation and truth. What gratitude would be due to the ſour critic, who ſhould endeavour to rob the youthful heart of this amiable enthuſiaſm, throwing it back into melancholy and diſguſt with life? Do you recollect what Rouſſeau ſays of love? It is not very

inapplicable

inapplicable to the ſubject we are upon. "If it be an illuſion, there is ſome reality in "the ſentiments it inſpires in favour of the "true beautiful, and we ſacrifice every for-"did idea to the imaginary model." Moſt of the happineſs of life perhaps conſiſts in agreeable illuſions, at leaſt the tree muſt bloſſom, before it will bear fruit.

I think I perceive, both in ſcripture and reaſon, ſtrong unanſwerable arguments for ſocial worſhip. Surely it is both beautiful and proper to unite in homage to our common parent for common bleſſings. Nor ſhould I apprehend any danger from prieſtcraft if the ſtate would not interfere about the manner of it. Multifarious are human opinions, and various are the avenues to the human heart; let every ſociety chooſe its own diſcipline, and modes, whether it be preaching, debating, ſinging, or praying—Peace be with them! We will not object to their forms, if they do not impoſe them on us. "Better have any religion, than none at "all." So long as Chriſtianity is kept diſtinct from civil polity, it will fall like a rich dew,

dew, fructifying and fertilizing the human character. Prieſtcraft (I again repeat) is a creature of the ſtate; diſſolve the unnatural union, and its terrors vaniſh "into thin air." I love the goſpel; and all the different modes and forms which are pretended to be derived from it (apart from Hierarchy) have ſomething of good in them, and are a glorious proof of religious liberty. Let us examine them gently; and while we endeavour to rectify, and ſimplify them, remember the gradations of human intellect, and never cheriſh the chimera of reducing all to our own ſtandard. Little external errors are as the duſt of the balance, when put in competion with moral benefit.

I remain, &c.

No. II.

THE ingenious author of "An Enquiry "into the Nature of Subſcription," has obſerved in a note affixed to his elegant addreſs to Freedom*, "that the moſt ſen-

* See Poems, by G. Dyer, B. A. Page 36.

"ſible

" ſible females, when they turn their at-
" tention to political ſubjects, are more
" uniformly on the ſide of liberty, than the
" other ſex." In proof of which he celebrates the reſpectable names of Macaulay, Wollſtonecraft, Barbauld, Jebb, Williams, and Smith. This predeliction he ſays, " may
" be accounted for without adopting the
" ſentiments or the language of gallantry.
" The truth is, the modes of education, and
" the cuſtoms of ſociety are degrading to
" the female character, and the tyranny of
" cuſtom is ſometimes worſe than the ty-
" ranny of government. When a ſenſible
" woman riſes above the tyranny of cuſtom
" ſhe feels a generous indignation; which
" when turned againſt the excluſive claims
" of the other ſex, is favourable to female
" pretenſions; when turned againſt the ty-
" ranny of government, it is commonly
" favourable to the rights of both ſexes.
" Moſt governments are partial, and more
" injurious to women than to men."

It may likewiſe be added, that as women have no claims to expect either penſion or place,

place, they are leſs in the vortex of influence; they are alſo more unſophiſticated by education, having neither ſyſtem, teſt, or ſubſcription impoſed upon them; and ſome ſubjects require only to be examined with an impartial and unprejudiced eye, to enſure conviction.—Without pretending to any profound knowledge of the arcana of politics, every thinking mind muſt be ſtruck with the exorbitant taxation which is thought neceſſary to defray the expences of certain eſtabliſhments both in church and ſtate. By what infatuation and magic ſo many hug their chains and bow down before the idol in power, at firſt view appears inconceivable; but when the progreſs of corruption is traced, and the force of habit acknowledged, our wonder ceaſes. "The "moſt neceſſary part of learning (ſaid one "of the Grecian philoſophers) is to unlearn "our errors;" and a conviction of the truth of the doctrine of aſſociation compels us to add, it is alſo the moſt difficult. Novel truths, or rather truths repreſented in a new point of view, operate moſt forcibly on the riſing generation, where the memory is not preoccupied.

preoccupied. It needs little of the ſpirit of prophecy, to predict that the preſent juſt and liberal notions on the ſubject of civil government, which like a flood of light irradiate Europe, will in future periods produce certain, though ſlow effects; the feeble efforts of prejudice and intereſt muſt in the end give way to truth, however gradual may be their declining ſtruggles.

Look back through the hiſtory of the world, from its golden days of infancy and innocence, to the maturity of the preſent times, and you will diſcern various truths, firſt dawning like the ſun through a miſty horizon, and after encountering many dark clouds of error and oppoſition, at length beaming forth in meridian brightneſs; thus gently and gradually diffuſing light and happineſs, leſt our weak faculties ſhould have been overpowered with the ſudden ſplendour. Our nature is progreſſive, and every thing around us is the ſame. Wiſe and benevolent plan! for "happineſs (truly "obſerves Epicurus) reſembles neither a "ſtanding pool, nor a rapid torrent, but is "like

" like a gentle ſtream that glides ſmoothly " and ſilently along." And ſurely legiſlation, in which the peace and the virtue of millions are concerned, cannot be the only ſubject that admits of no improvement. * " In different communities different laws " are inſtituted, according to the circum- " ſtances of the people who enact them. " Whatever is thus preſcribed ſhould be a " rule of juſtice, ſo long as the ſociety ſhall " judge the obſervance of it to be for the " benefit of the whole; but when this is " found upon experience not to be the caſe, " being no longer uſeful, it ſhould be no " longer preſcribed."

I love peace, and am one of thoſe who " faint when they do look on blood." And moſt devoutly do I pray that a wiſe and peaceful reformation of the groſs corruptions and abuſes which deform the preſent ſyſtem of government in this country, may preclude all dreadful extremities; to ſay nothing of the juſtice of ſuch meaſures, ſound policy

* Enfield's Hiſtory of Philoſophy.

requires

requires them; for the hiſtoric page has invariably atteſted the vanity of fines, proſcriptions, proclamations, and prohibitions, to arreſt the progreſs of the human mind. In paſſing through the ſtreets of this great metropolis, a humane heart muſt ſhudder at the glaring proofs of profligacy and vice, which continually obtrude themſelves both on the eye and ear; nor will it be unjuſt to charge theſe in a great meaſure on legiſlation. If there be proper laws exiſting to prevent theſe ſhocking depravities, ſo deſtructive to the morals, to the population, to the well-being of a country—Say! why, are they not enforced? Bluſh ye princes and nobles of the land, if ye have not yet entirely loſt the complexion of virtue! for yours is the contagious example, that with peſtilential influence pervades all ſociety. A race of men "born only to conſume the "fruits of the earth," and ſet on high for others to maintain by the ſweat of their brow, muſt neceſſarily be corrupt; for idleneſs engenders every evil: and how few comparatively are there who know how to ſpend leiſure well! "The ranks of ſociety

"aroſe

" aroſe from the vices and follies of man-
" kind, and are therefore to be deſpiſed,"
ſaid an ancient ſage. And they are moſt
certainly calculated to perpetuate the crimes
and frivolity from whence they ſprung.

I have paid very little attention to the venal politics of the day, as conceiving they merited but little. But a benevolent mind cannot view with indifference its fellow-creatures ſinking into depravation and conſequent miſery. Plain general principles are obvious to every one who ſtops to reflect. I ſhould ſhrink from the idea of a revolution, for I want ſufficient courage to claim the crown of martyrdom (and thoſe who ſuffer in endeavouring to benefit others, whatever be the cauſe, are unqueſtionably martyrs) and I again earneſtly repeat the wiſh, that the wiſdom of the legiſlature may keep pace with the national light. The emancipated mind is impatient of impoſition, nor can it, in a retrogade courſe, unlearn what it has learned, or unknow what it has known.

It appears to me that all monarchical, and ariſtocratical governments, carry within themſelves the ſeeds of their diſſolution; for when they become corrupt, and oppreſſive to a certain degree, the effects muſt neceſſarily be murmurs, remonſtrances, and revolt. I almoſt ſhudder at the preſent general diffuſion of political knowledge; for however I approve the principles, the deſolations in a neighbouring country, make me tremble at the very idea of the dangers (from the oppoſition of jarring intereſts) attending the practice. Poſterity will, I have no doubt, reap the benefit of the preſent ſtruggles in France, but they are ruinous and dreadful to thoſe actually engaged in them. How will the page of hiſtory (while it records the noble efforts—

" Inſpiring glory through remoteſt time.")

be clouded and ſtained with ſanguinary details; and how complicated, how affecting, muſt be the ſcenes of private calamity! * And though very far from being a well-wiſher

* The above obſervations were written while the public mind was agitated with the account of the maſſacres

wiſher to their cauſe, yet, as individuals, I muſt commiſerate the ſufferings of the late reigning family. Great allowances ought to be made for early prejudices, and aſſociations, and for the peculiar temptations attending peculiar ſituations; neither can their former luxury, and ſecurity, by any means have fitted their minds to encounter with firmneſs the terrible reverſe; the flattery and proſperity attendant upon high ſtations, enervate the mind, and deprive it of its natural ſtrength; ſteadineſs and fortitude are the hardy offspring of adverſity. A little reflection on the ſtructure of the human underſtanding, on the force of habit, the allurements of power, and the influence of external circumſtances would tend to mitigate the ſeverity of our cenſures, and ſoften the ſtern inflexibility of juſtice with the tear of ſympathy.

and popular inſurrections in Paris, the mere temporary effervescence of ſpirits heated by the enthuſiaſm of the moment, and irritated by treachery and cruelty. In a generous and enlightened nation, ſuch diſorders muſt neceſſarily be tranſient; and it would be equally as abſurd as unjuſt, to charge them upon principles to which they are utterly repugnant.

The

The body politic of Europe in general, ſeems at preſent like the body natural; when ſtruggling to expel offenſive and morbed humours; the convulſive efforts threaten more immediate danger than even the lurking miſchief, and there is reaſon to dread leſt the patient expire under the operation of the powerful remedy. The great and good Dr. Hartley, ſpeaking of the torrent of vice and impiety that over-runs every ſtate in Chriſtendom, and which ſeems increaſing, and likely ſtill to increaſe from time to time, obſerves, that "it can ſcarce be doubted by "a conſiderate man, whether he be a re-"ligious one or no, but this licentiouſneſs "will, ſooner or later, bring on a total diſ-"ſolution of all the forms of government, "that ſubſiſt at preſent in the Chriſtian "countries of Europe."

No. III.

OF all bondage, mental bondage is ſurely the moſt fatal; the abſurd deſpotiſm which has hitherto, with more than gothic

 barbarity,

barbarity, enſlaved the female mind, the enervating and degrading ſyſtem of manners by which the underſtandings of women have been chained down to frivolity and trifles, have increaſed the general tide of effeminacy and corruption. To conform to the perpetual fluctuation of faſhion (and few have the courage to dare the "ſlow "and moving finger of ſcorn," which is pointed at every external ſingularity) requires almoſt their whole time and attention, and leaves little leiſure for intellectual improvement.

"Say dreamers of gay dreams!
"How will you weather an eternal night,
"Where ſuch expedients fail?"

It has been alleged, that this conſtant variation of mode is ſerviceable to commerce, and promotes a briſk circulation of money; or with more propriety it might be ſaid a quick ſucceſſion of bankruptcies: but however this may be, it is I conceive making too expenſive an offering at the golden ſhrine of Plutus to ſacrifice all the dignified

dignified and rational purſuits of life. A few diſtinguiſhed individuals, feeling the powers of their own minds (for what can curb the celeſtial energy of genius?) are endeavouring to diſpel the magical illuſions of cuſtom, and reſtore degraded woman to the glory of rationality, and to a fitneſs for immortality. The rights of woman, and the name of Woollſtonecraft, will go down to poſterity with reverence, when the pointleſs ſarcaſms of witlings are forgotten. I am aware that ſome men of real good ſenſe and candor, have ſuppoſed that the idea of there being no ſexual character, is carried in this moſt admirable work a little too far. Let them reflect for a moment on the extremes which the oppoſite opinion has produced; and ſay from whence ariſes the moſt formidable danger? Is there any cauſe to apprehend that we may ſubject our feelings too much to the guidance of reaſon? Or that we ſhall conduct the buſineſs of our families with too much order and equity: to the wiſe and good only, I now appeal! would you not dare to give up any of the allurements of the miſtreſs (if indeed any

need be given up worth the preſerving) to the refined pleaſure of living with a rational and equal companion? In ſuch an intercourſe, when enlivened by love, if happineſs reſides on earth, ſurely it is to be found! where the advantages are reciprocal, for each reflects back with intereſt, the light they receive. Similarity of mind and principle is the only true baſis of harmony. Great ſuperiority of either ſide cauſes a narrow jealouſy, or a painful conſtraint; there is nothing ſo irkſome as to converſe with people who cannot underſtand you.

Others (I mean the vulgar of every rank) terrified at the very idea of our feeling and aſſerting our rights to rationality, raiſe innumerable cavils and objections, all originating from the ſame ſource, a pertinacious and jealous adherence to a narrow and miſtaken ſelf-intereſt, and the petty word AUTHORITY. It is this which makes the prieſt on certain occaſions raiſe an alarm about the ſafety of the church, the ſovereign with paternal ſolicitude endeavour to guard his people from light and knowledge, by royal

royal proclamations and prohibitions, and the Epheſians to exclaim that their "craft is "in danger." Muſt I inform theſe profound politicians, that every infringement of right weakens duty, every ſtretch of prerogative gives a mortal wound to monarchy, and every weak fence of proſcription prepares the way for their utter demolition, and for laying Hierarchy waſte? The love of arbitrary power, with morbid influence, corrupts the human mind; and after the factitious ſtrength of the delirium, exhauſted by the unnatural exertion, ſinks it into helpleſs effeminacy and cowardly deſpondence, the uſurper muſt ſooner or later be the victim of his uſurpation.

Let thoſe who love influence ſeek it by ſurer methods; bolts and bars may confine for a time the feeble body, but can never enchain the noble, the free-born mind; the only true grounds of power are reaſon and affection, vows of obedience are lighter than vanity, but the ſenſible heart rejoices to anticipate the wiſhes of the object of its tenderneſs. Ye ſimple men! ſo tenacious

of your prerogative, inſinuate yourſelves gently into our affections and underſtandings, reſpect in us the majeſty of rationality, upon which ye ſo juſtly value yourſelves, and ye will have no cauſe to complain that like wayward children, ſpoilt by equally misjudged careſſes and correction, we in fact tyranniſe over you by our caprices, while you are deluded with mock enſigns of power. And even where this is not the caſe, and the brute prevails over the weak infant, or the heart-broken ſlave, ſay! what are the mighty advantages ye reap from your dear-bought victory? Sullen acquieſcence, gloomy reſignation, fretful impatience, or degrading ſervility; all the virtues of the woman (for virtue is not the child of conſtraint) ſunk in the poor ſpiritleſs contemptible ſlave; and when totally degraded by abject compliances to a tyrannical deſpot, every act of tame ſubjection to unreaſonable requiſitions, by weakening affection, clouding reaſon, and exciting diſguſt (for even the worm at times will turn upon the trampler) prepares the way for defection by undermining principle; and it

is "by good luck" only, if the effects are not ſuch as a penetrating eye, going back to firſt cauſes, might without a prophetic ſpirit eaſily foreſee, or if actuated by criminal and ſelfiſh motives as eaſily perhaps bring to paſs.

"Let him ungenerous, who alone intent
"To bleſs himſelf—in eternal cares
"Well merited, conſume his nights and days!
"Let barbarous nations whoſe inhuman love
"Is wild deſire! let eaſtern tyrants
"From the light of heaven ſeclude their boſom
"Slaves! meanly poſſeſt of a mere lifeleſs
"Violated form!
"While thoſe whom love cements in holy faith
"And equal tranſports, free as nature live,
"Diſdaining fear."

"Alas! (ſays the ſenſible writer of the Per-
"ſian Letters) I may find in Perſia a ſeraglio
"compoſed of beautiful ſlaves, the merce-
"nary or reluctant victims to groſs and ty-
"rannical deſire. But what rational con-
"verſe can I hope from theſe? What true
"affection? What ſolid peace? What heart-
"felt delight? But was Zelis my wife, in
"ſuch a wife I ſhould find the moſt endeared,

moſt

" moſt pleaſing, moſt faithful friend! All " the precautions of eaſtern jealouſy would " then be unneceſſary; thoſe wretched pre- " cautions! which if they bar the door " againſt diſhonour, ſhut out eſteem, the life " of friendſhip, and confidence, the ſoul of " love." Religion, reaſon, and affection, are ſtricter ſurer guards, than walls of adamant.

Lovers of truth! be not partial in your reſearches. Men of ſenſe and ſcience! remember, by degrading our underſtandings, you incapacitate us for knowing your value, and make coxcombs take place of you in our eſteem. The ignorant and the vulgar prove their cunning by levelling principles; but you! how impolitic to throw a veil over our eyes, that we may not diſtinguiſh the radiance that ſurrounds you!

Objections are alſo made againſt the vindication of our rights, under the pretence, that by enlarging and ennobling our minds, we ſhall be undomeſticated, and unfitted (I ſuppoſe is meant) for mere houſehold drudges.

drudges. With the excellent Dr. Prieſtley, I repeat " this is a ſordid and debaſing pre-" judice," of the fallacy of which I have been convinced both from experience and obſervation. Numberleſs women have I known, whoſe ſtudies (incapable of the " epicuriſm of reaſon and religion") have been confined to Mrs. Glaſſe's Art of Cookery, and whoſe whole time has been ſpent in the kitchen, altercating with and changing of ſervants, provoking them to diſhoneſty by mean cautions, and narrow diſtruſt; and immerſed in unneceſſary and dirty drudgery, have ruined their health, ſpoilt their tempers, neglected their perſons, laid waſte their minds, and ſacrificed their friends, and after all theſe expenſive forfeitures, have never attained the end; but have (to uſe a feminine phraſe) muddled away their time and money in the diſorderly management of hands without a head; been cheated by their dependents, becauſe neither feeling reſpect or attachment they have gloried in outwitting them; and their acquaintance, turning with diſguſt from their expenſive and laboured treats,

have

have ſighed for the plain diſh, the cordial and hoſpitable manners, "the feaſt of rea-
"ſon and the flow of ſouls." Contraſt with this the following picture from Fitzoſborne's charming Letters, "Her refined ſenſe, and
"extenſive knowledge have not raiſed her
"above the neceſſary acquiſitions of female
"ſcience; they have only taught her to
"fill that part of her character with higher
"grace and dignity. She enters into all the
"domeſtic duties of her ſtation with the
"moſt conſummate ſkill and prudence;
"her economical deportment is calm and
"ſteady; and ſhe preſides over her family
"like the intelligence of ſome planetary
"orb, conducting it in all its proper direc-
"tions without violence, or diſturbed
"effort."

But the vindicator of female rights is thought by ſome ſagacious married men to be incompetent to form any juſt opinion of the cares and duties of a conjugal ſtate, from never having entered the matrimonial liſts, becauſe perhaps ſhe has not met with the man who knows how properly to value her,

her, or having met, may, alas! have loſt. Wonderful free-maſonry this! and ridiculous as wonderful. To be ſure thoſe who are eagerly engaged in play, with all their ſelf-intereſt up in arms, are much better judges of the game than the cool impartial looker on; and a Weſt-India Planter muſt underſtand the juſtice of the Slave-Trade far better than an Engliſh Houſe of Commons, to ſay nothing of the very ſuperior and extraordinary political wiſdom neceſſarily belonging to the office of Prime Miniſter, of which the profane vulgar can form no idea! What nonſenſe this! Does it need a ſerious refutation? From ſuch notions (moſt devoutly I repeat a part of the liturgy) good Lord deliver us.

" Every ſcience (ſaid the late Mr. Robin-
" ſon in his political Catechiſm) beheld in
" the groſs, reſembles a loaded fruit tree in
" autumn; but as all the fruits and foliage
" and ramifications of the one, ſo all the
" departments of the other, may be reduced
" to a few firſt principles, and theſe com-
" prehended, the whole is underſtood."

" Myſtery,

" Myſtery, he adds, is a fine material for " manufacture."

For once Rouſſeau does us juſtice, and writes, " Notwithſtanding the corrupt man- " ners of the age, women are no more " ſtrangers than men to that rapturous " enthuſiaſm with which the ideas of wiſ- " dom and virtue fire the ſoul." Domeſtic concord is the lovely fruit of ſympathy, congeniality, and kindred ſenſe and good- neſs. With equal ſweetneſs and truth, ſung the Poet in his admirable Indian Philo- ſopher.

" Happy the youth that finds the bride,
" Whoſe birth is to his own allied,
" The ſweeteſt joy of life:
" But oh! the crowds of wretched ſouls,
" Fetter'd to minds of different moulds,
" And chain'd to eternal ſtrife.

" Some courteous angel tell me where,
" What diſtant lands this unknown fair,
" Or diſtant ſeas detain?
" Swift as the wheel of nature rolls,
" I'd fly to meet and mingle ſouls,
" And wear the joyful chain."

No. IV.

To Mrs. ——.

My dear Madam,

YOUR eldeſt daughter you inform me is now entering her fifteenth year, and diſcovers a love of books, which gives you great pleaſure, as you juſtly conſider a taſte for reading as the beſt foundation for moral as well as ſpeculative improvement. Books contain the beſt parts of the fineſt human minds, in them you perceive only the excellencies of genius without thoſe ſhades that muſt unavoidably diſcolour the pureſt human virtues. I am aware that book-knowledge has been ridiculed by many, as uſeleſs in the common intercourſes of life; but theſe ſarcaſms I fancy have generally been the refuge of ignorance, glorying in its ſhame; and that knowledge of the world which they recommend as a ſubſtitute, when analyzed, I believe frequently conſiſts in an acquaintance with chicanery and turpitude, and "to touch pitch and not be de-

"filed,"

" filed," is very difficult. It certainly is not neceſſary for every individual to apply himſelf to abſtract and ſcientific purſuits, as this would be defeating the purpoſes of ſociety, which requires hands as well as heads. " And what is above us (ſaid So-" crates) doth not concern us;" but there are few ſituations in the leaſt degree ſuperior to the loweſt ranks of life, that do not allow of ſome leiſure, and to fill up that leiſure in a manner that may not only afford preſent entertainment, but alſo lay in ſtores for future improvement, is certainly highly laudable. Nothing is ſo much to be avoided in the education of young people, as the leaving too many hours of vacuity; by habits of indolence, the body, the mind, and the morals are endangered. Lavater juſtly obſerves, that " idleneſs is the crying ſin of " human nature." It is an ancient and a true maxim, " That nothing can be accom-" pliſhed without labour, and every thing " with it." Thoſe to whom the care of youth is intruſted, ſhould be particularly ſedulous to guard them from this canker of every virtue, by exciting them to exerciſe their

their fancy and ingenuity, their faculties and their limbs.

I confeſs I am no advocate for cramping the minds and bodies of young girls, by keeping them for ever poring over needle-work (and when I ſee the tapeſtry and tent-ſtitch of former times, I ſigh at the waſte of eyes, ſpirits, and time); nor do I think it ſo very important a part of female education as has generally been ſuppoſed. In well-regulated families, where nothing is left till to-morrow, which can be done to-day, where every department is conducted with order and economy, where the buſineſs of the day is planned in the morning, and one thing concluded before another is begun; where the day is lengthened by early hours, and ſhort temperate meals, "eating "to live, and not living only to eat;" I am well aſſured there cannot be any occaſion for this laborious and ſempſtreſs-like application: ſurely the covering of the body ought not to be the ſole buſineſs of life. I doubt whether there will be any ſewing in the next world, how then will thoſe em-

ploy themſelves who have done nothing elſe in this?

Sempronia had a large family of daughters, whom ſhe early trained with unrelenting rigour to the duties of non-reſiſtance and paſſive obedience. All attention to literature, ſhe conſidered as mere waſte of time, and valued herſelf upon being unacquainted with any other book than the Bible. The ſole accompliſhments which this notable lady deemed neceſſary to conſtitute a good wife and mother, were to ſcold and half ſtarve her ſervants, to oblige her children to ſay their prayers, and go ſtatedly to church, and to make clothes and houſehold furniture from morning till night; while to ſupply them with conſtant employment of this nature, more money was expended, and materials waſted, than would have paid for having the work done from home, and have purchaſed a handſome collection of books beſide. The unfortunate girls ſubmitted to this ſevere diſcipline from hard neceſſity, but not without murmuring; till at length, from cloſe con-

confinement, and the dull uniformity of one tedious purſuit, the bloom faded from their cheeks, and the luſtre from their eyes, their tempers loſt their ſprightlineſs, and their health its vigor. Their mother who really loved them, and who thought that while ſhe was blighting the tender bloſſom in its ſpring, ſhe was performing the duties of a prudent and good parent, was alarmed at the change ſhe perceived; and after vainly trying the efficacy of various quack medicines recommended as infallible reſtoratives, accompanied the young ladies to one of the faſhionable watering places, in the hope of their receiving benefit from the ſalubrious effects of the ſea air.

During their reſidence at Brighthelmſtone, the languid charms of the elder daughter attracted the notice of the ſon of a wealthy citizen, who having received a liberal, though mercantile education, had been accuſtomed to amuſe himſelf in the intervals of commercial buſineſs, with the ſtudy of the Belle-Letters. His imagination had acquired by theſe purſuits a tincture of what

is commonly called romance by the generality of the trading part of mankind; he had been diſguſted with the venal daughters of faſhion, and the really ſweet, though fading countenance of our young lady (whom I ſhall call Serena) the baſhfulneſs of her manners, and the meekneſs of her deportment, awakened his tenderneſs, and flattered his vanity. The vulgar and confined notions of the mother he dignified with the name of ſimplicity; and as his Serena ſeldom ventured to converſe freely in his preſence, her ſilence he conſtrued into the effect of a delicate timidity. He could not but perceive that her mind had been greatly neglected, but he conſoled himſelf with the hope of giving it improvement and poliſh, and exclaimed with Rouſſeau, "Lovely ignorance! Happy will he "be who is deſtined to inſtruct her." Full of theſe ideas he haſtened their union, that he might remove his charming miſtreſs out of a family where he conceived ſhe was degraded, and tranſplant her into—

"A richer ſoil, where vernal ſuns and ſhowers,
"Diffuſe their warmeſt, largeſt influence."

Serena,

Serena, by ſea-bathing, recreation, and the attentions of her lover, which gave her thoughts a new turn, in ſome meaſure recovered her health and beauty, and in a few weeks became the wife of Melville, who now believed himſelf at the ſummit of human felicity. After the firſt congratulations and compliments were over, he conducted his bride to a pleaſant villa, ſituated on the banks of the Thames, a few miles from the metropolis, intending before he introduced her to his connections (many of whom were among the polite and the literary) to devote his leiſure hours to the cultivation and enlargement of her underſtanding.

For this purpoſe he furniſhed a commodious library with an elegant aſſortment of books, and when after the buſineſs of the day he returned from town, he would endeavour to entertain his Serena, by reading ſelect paſſages from the beſt Engliſh authors, particularly the works of the Poets, and moral Eſſayiſts. But to his great mortification, when after repeating with enthuſiaſm ſome of the fineſt paſſages in Shakeſpear, he

glanced his eyes on his lady to perceive the effect it produced; the ſettled vacuity of her features announced the blank within. She ſeemed to liſten, and faintly ſmiled, but it was the forced ſmile of laſſitude; ſhe had no aſſociations that could make her feel any intereſt in the glowing pictures of genius, and would interrupt the ſoul-harrowing ſcene between Hamlet and his guilty mother, to obſerve upon a phaeton that paſſed the window, or return the careſſes of a favourite lap-dog. Poor Melville ſhuddered! the viſionary ſcene of bliſs began to fade from his imagination, he threw down his book, and to hide his chagrin, propoſed to his wife a walk, as ſhe had yet ſeen but little of the adjacent country. She readily agreed to accompany him, happy to be relieved from the irkſome taſk, of giving a feigned attention to what ſhe could not comprehend. Melville endeavoured to direct her view as they paſſed to every ſublime and beautiful feature in nature, the wood and the water, the hill and the valley, the wild heath and the cultivated garden—

" The ſun-ſhine gleaming as through amber clouds,
" O'er all the weſtern ſky."

But

But alas! the varied "*ſhews and forms" of nature were loſt on the ſterile fancy that had never received—" fair cultures kind " enlivening aid." She entreated that they might return to the high road, for ſhe was ſure the path they had taken muſt be equally unſafe as dull and difficult, and ſhe was every moment in terror, leſt a robber ſhould ſtart out of the thicket. Her diſguſted companion ſighed as he ſilently acceded to her propoſal, and began unwillingly to be convinced that true beauty muſt depend upon moral ſentiment, and that the mere varniſh of a fair complexion could make no amends for a weak and empty mind.

Vain was every ſubſequent attempt to give fire to this breathing clay, early habits had rendered the mental organs callous; the pretty inſipid Serena would ſmile when he ſmiled, and weep when he frowned, but her

* Oh! nature, all thy ſhews and forms,
For penſive feeling hearts have charms.
BURN'S Poems.

tenderneſs flattered not; for there was no diſtinction in it. She had no will of her own (for the little energy ſhe inherited from nature, had been quenched by the deſpotic diſcipline of the good lady her mother) and Melville wearied by the uniformity of her compliances, which gratified neither his judgment nor his heart, vainly exhorted her ſometimes to have a taſte of her own; for he would even have preferred oppoſition to the dead calm in which their days languiſhed, and he dreaded to enliven them by ſociety; for the groſs inaccuracies, and frivolity of his lady's converſation, expoſed him to the ridicule of his acquaintance, and covered him with confuſion.

Nor did the domeſtic management of his affairs afford him any conſolation. His wife ſought amuſement in the company of her ſervants, ſhe preſerved no dignity of character, and acted not upon any plan; conſequently her authority was deſpiſed, nothing was conducted with regularity, and while ſhe ſat whole days in looſe diſhabille to ſupernumerary needle-work, which turned

to

to little account, her houſe was filled with litter and diſorder, her children ran wild, and her domeſtics quarrelled among themſelves, and defrauded their maſter, as amid frequent changes, the certain conſequence of miſmanagement, it could not be expected that they would all be honeſt.

The unfortunate Melville, whoſe mind was formed for elegant and domeſtic tenderneſs, execrated his fate in the bitterneſs of his ſoul, and deſperately ſought to forget his diſappointment in ſcenes of diſſipation and extravagance; and in a few years his expences abroad, and the want of order and economy at home, involved them in the miſeries of inſolvency.

This little hiſtory requires no comment; your Elizabeth, for whoſe entertainment it is intended, will perhaps be ſtimulated by it to new ardor in mental purſuits. That I intereſt myſelf in her happineſs, you need not now be informed, and that I am affectionately, &c. yours.

No. V.

No. V.

To Mrs. ——.

ELIZABETH you inform me intereſts herſelf in the fate of Sempronia's family, and wiſhes to know what became of Melville and Serena after the derangement of their affairs, and whether they were ever re-adjuſted? I am gratified by the curioſity ſhe expreſſes, and will endeavour to give her all the ſatisfaction in my power.

Melville, after ſurrendering his effects to his creditors, and placing his wife under the protection of her parents, and his children (a little boy and girl) with his own relations, quitted England on the advice of his friends, and made a voyage to America, to inquire after ſome commercial concerns intruſted in the hands of an agent in New-York, who had for ſome years paſt failed in his accuſtomed remittances, and whoſe fidelity he had great reaſon to diſtruſt. On his arrival he found his ſuſpicions

but

but too well verified, and after diſcharging this unfaithful ſteward, took the management of his affairs into his own hands, and in five years, by induſtry and attention, was enabled to retrieve in a meaſure his ſhattered fortune, and to remit to his creditors the remainder of what was due to them, both principal and intereſt, alſo to defray the expences attending the maintenance of his wife and children, and to ſupport himſelf in a decent but frugal manner. In the ſixth year of his reſidence abroad, he received letters from London, containing an account of the death of Mrs. Melville, whoſe health had been for ſome years in a declining ſituation. His infelicity during a marriage life, had made him conceive an unreaſonable averſion to the ſtate, and he determined to devote the remainder of his days alternately to buſineſs and to letters, intending to continue in America, till his children were of an age to be introduced into the world, when he purpoſed returning to England, ſending orders in the mean time for their being placed in proper ſeminaries of education.

In

In the courſe of his literary purſuits ſome deiſtical works accidentally came into his hands: he had never paid much attention to religion, and the little that he had ſeen of it, in the family of his wife, had been ſo groſsly blended with fanaticiſm and ſuperſtition, as had ever excited his ridicule, rather than his reverence. His mind naturally ingenuous and fond of inquiry was dazzled with the wit and brilliant talents of Voltaire, and delighted with the genius, as well as ſhaken by the ſophiſtry of Hume. He was unfurniſhed with arguments to bring in oppoſition to thoſe which now aſſaulted him, and he became involved in a gloomy and reſtleſs ſtate of ſcepticiſm. His youthful ſenſibility had been chilled by diſappointment, and infidelity blighted its remaining bloſſoms; he looked backward with anguiſh, and forward without hope. A recent and glaring inſtance of chicanery and avarice which he had met with in his connexions with a trader who made oſtentatious pretenſions to an uncommon degree of ſanctity, confirmed him in his new principles; but this confirmation afforded him

no

no pleaſure, for loving virtue from taſte, there were not any reſtraints from which he wiſhed to be freed, and he reſigned the ſoothing expectation of happineſs beyond the grave, without receiving in return any compenſation.

Reclining one evening on a ruſtic ſeat which commanded one of thoſe wild and romantic proſpects which abound on the American continent, his heart ſoftened as he gazed, and his eyes ſwam in tears, when ſuddenly ſtarting from the poſture in which he had been ſitting, he gave vent to the feelings which ſtruggled in his ſoul, and exclaimed aloud, Glorious and beneficent Author of all things! is it poſſible to contemplate this luxuriant and glowing landſcape, abounding in all that can ſuſtain the body, and dilate the heart with joy, without catching from the Divine Source of good emanations of benevolence and kindneſs! yet (continued he, folding his arms with a deep ſigh, and purſuing his walk with dejected ſteps) have I not repeatedly experienced melancholy and convincing proofs, that

that the contracted heart of man refuſes to expand itſelf, and notwithſtanding the plenty which Providence ſhowers upon him, ſhuts his hand and his affections to his leſs fortunate brother, and is dead to the common calls of humanity. And ſhall ſuch wretches, whom human nature bluſhes to acknowledge, ſhall ſuch dignify themſelves with the title of Chriſtian, and pretend to be zealous defenders of revelation? "Be then the religion of nature mine!" As he uttered the laſt ſentence in a raiſed and indignant voice, lifting his eyes from the ground, he ſaw advancing towards him, a man rather advanced in years, of a plain, but decent appearance, who regarded him with looks expreſſive of benignity and concern, and in a firm, yet mild manner, reproved him for an exclamation, which ſeemed rather the reſult of a tranſient emotion of paſſion, than dictated by a mind capable of thoſe devotional and grateful ſentiments, which had appeared to animate the former part of a ſoliloquy, which this benevolent ſtranger had been liſtening to with mingled pleaſure and concern. Mel-

ville

ville bluſhed, when on obſerving the countenance of his friendly monitor, he recollected the features of a miniſter (whom he had occaſionally heard) who preached to a plain, but numerous congregation, in a village, a few miles diſtant from New-York, and whoſe liberality, good-ſenſe, and unaffected piety, had procured him univerſal love and reſpect. Perhaps, Sir, ſaid he, I may have been too haſty in my cenſures, at leaſt, if I may believe that thoſe virtues are derived from the goſpel, which render your name ſo juſtly reſpected: the good man anſwered this compliment only by a ſlight inclination of his head, and wiſhing to enter into ſome further converſation, invited Melville to return to the ſeat he had juſt quitted, which was ſhaded by the ſpreading branches of a large walnut-tree from the ſlanting rays of the ſetting ſun.

Melville liſtened with attention to his mild inſtructor, who was alſo an Engliſhman, and who had early in life been a clergyman in the Eſtabliſhed Church, but becoming an Unitarian Chriſtian, had re-

ſigned

ſigned a valuable living, and retired with a widowed ſiſter, and a ſmall patrimony, to New-York, where he cultivated a little farm, and on a Sunday explained to a ſerious, but ſimple auditory, the pure doctrines of the goſpel, and enforced its precepts. During their converſation, he diſcovered a profound erudition, and a clear and forcible method of reaſoning, that filled Melville with equal ſurpriſe and pleaſure; and diveſting Chriſtianity of the corruptions of ſcholaſtic jargon on the one ſide, and fanatic myſticiſm on the other, he repreſented the important truths it taught, its analogy with the concluſions of right reaſon, the pure and ſocial morality it inculcated, the ſublime character of its founder, the diſintereſtedneſs of its firſt promulgators, the harmony of their narrations, the accompliſhment of prophecies, the accumulation of hiſtorical teſtimonies, the difficulties which impeded its progreſs, the ſpirituality of its nature, the exalted hopes afforded by it,—the various and incontrovertible evidences of its truth, both internal and external,—in a manner ſo perſpicuous, energetic,

getic, and affecting, as could not but make a deep impreſſion on the mind of his auditor; and he beſought the continuance of his council and friendſhip with an earneſtneſs and frankneſs, that inſpired this truly good man with ſimilar ſentiments of ſympathy and eſteem. The time glided away almoſt imperceptibly, and night came upon them before they thought of ſeparating. Melville promiſed at parting, to make an early viſit to his new and reſpectable friend; and, in the interval, to reflect ſeriouſly on what had paſſed.

In the courſe of theſe reflections, he felt his mind ſoftened and relieved; the bright beams of truth irradiated the gloom, and cordial friendſhip meliorated its aſperity. A few days after, he determined to fulfil the promiſe he had made, and to make a viſit to the farm of Theron. As he advanced towards the habitation of his friend, the air of cultivation and plenty, which appeared in every thing around him (for it was near the time of harveſt) the cheerfulneſs and health that animated the features

of the ruſtics, the alacrity and ſatisfaction with which they ſeemed to exert themſelves in their ſeveral departments, filled the benevolent heart of Melville with hilarity and pleaſure. He ſaw in induſtry charms, which he had never before obſerved, and which recalled to his remembrance the firſt ages of mankind, before luxury and avarice had corrupted the human race. The nearer he drew to the houſe of Theron, he fancied the ſcene grew more intereſting; the amiable mind of the owner of the fields ſeemed to pervade every object, and the very air to breathe virtue. On the left ſide of the houſe, at the end of a green lawn, in the boſom of a thick ſhrubbery, he perceived a ſmall gothic hermitage, at a little diſtance from which a caſcade poured down a ſteep irregular deſcent, into a ſort of baſon (from whence it diſperſed in different ſtreams through the grounds, carrying fertility as it flowed) and by its daſhing murmuring ſound, diſpoſed the ſoul to that penſive, tender melancholy, that is calculated "to ſoften, not to wound the heart,"

and

and which at once refines and amends it. The entrance to this charming ſolitude commanded a rich and extenſive proſpect: villages ſurrounded with fruitful meadows, interſperſed with elegant ſeats, cultivated gardens, and ever verdant plains, terminated by foreſts of mingled fir and cedar, and lofty mountains, on whoſe ſummits the clouds reſted. It was impoſſible for Melville not to turn aſide to examine nearer a retreat ſo ſuitable to the wild and romantic turn of his mind. He advanced towards it, full of that enthuſiaſm which the contemplation of the ſublime and beautiful in nature never fails to inſpire in ſenſible and uncorrupted minds.

" Almighty! thine this univerſal frame,
" Thus wondrous fair, thyſelf how wondrous then!"

Let the formaliſt approach his Creator by human rites and ceremonies, and the cold-hearted ridicule, as fanatical, emotions, which his apathy incapacitates him for feeling! Thoſe who can ſurvey unmoved, " the " form of beauty that ſmiles at the heart," even of the untutored ruſtic, are religious

merely from ſuperſtition and prejudice, and are incapable of the devotion, that ariſes out of conviction and love.

As Melville drew nearer the hermitage, he heard ſome perſon reading aloud. He ſtopt and liſtened. The accent was feminine, and the tone of voice peculiarly ſweet and flexible. The ſubject, which engaged the attention of this fair recluſe, was Dr. Beattie's Minſtrel, from which ſhe repeated, with particular propriety and pathos, the following lines.

" Hail awful ſhades that ſooth the troubled breaſt!
" And woo the weary to profound repoſe!
" Can paſſions wildeſt tumult lull to reſt,
" And whiſper comfort to the man of woes.
" Here innocence may wander ſafe from foes,
" And contemplation ſoar on ſeraph *wings*;
" Oh ſolitude! the wretch who thee foregoes,
" When lucre lures him, or ambition ſtings,
" Shall never know the ſource whence real grandeur ſprings."

She ſighed deeply, and was ſilent; her accents ſtill vibrated on the ear of Melville, and touched the ſtring that called up aſſociations,

ciations, that had long lain dormant. He hesitated whether to go back, or proceed, when he was roused by the voice of Theron. You must, my dear Cecilia, endeavour to be cheerful; your dutiful regret has endeared you to me, yet let reason and religion prescribe its bounds. Why should we incessantly weep for the dead? our tears cannot recall them, and—we shall meet again. Alas! replied Cecilia, who will supply to me the loss of maternal delicacy and tenderness? Forgive me, my respected friend, I have an entire confidence in your goodness and friendship; allow a little longer time for the feelings of nature: I do not forget that I am a Christian; and virtuous sorrow chastens and rectifies the heart. Theron was about to reply, but Melville suddenly recollecting himself, appeared at the entrance of the grotto. He was received by his friend with cordiality and pleasure, and presented by him to his niece (Cecilia) who had already excited some little emotion in the bosom of Melville, and his sensibility was still more awakened by her appearance. She was by no means

beautiful,—but grace and expreſſion irradiated her features, and, to the diſcerning obſerver, compenſated for the want of exact regularity; penetration and intelligence beamed in her eyes, and her looks varied with every ſentiment of her heart. She was of the middle height, inclining to tall, and her figure was light and elegant. She appeared to be about ſeven and twenty; and if time had faded the firſt bloom of youth, the mature graces and dignity of womanhood rendered her not leſs intereſting; at leaſt Melville thought ſo; for moral ſentiment entered into his ideas of beauty. Her manners were frank and elegant, full of ſpirit, delicacy, and good ſenſe; mixed with ſome degree of pride, or rather elevation, as conſcious of her own worth. She was in deep mourning for her mother, the ſiſter of Theron; and affliction had clouded her natural vivacity, and, as Sterne expreſſes it, "tempered her countenance "with ſomething that was ſcarce earthly." Her uncle had paid particular attention to her education, and her improvement in every liberal ſcience had amply rewarded

his

his cares. She had never been introduced into gay circles, and was unacquainted with the faſhionable varniſh generally inculcated on the ſex, through which you never ſee the real woman, and which deſtroys all individuality of character: untinctured with affectation, unconſcious of an idea inconſiſtent with cleanlineſs of mind, ſhe had been accuſtomed to look and ſpeak her heart; and her expreſſions anſwered to the livelineſs of her conceptions.

Thoſe emotions which we feel at the firſt ſight of an object that pleaſes us, cannot perhaps with propriety be called love. This is an idea that has generally been ridiculed as romantic and abſurd, and not without reaſon: for how very unworthy are thoſe tranſient ſenſations of paſſion, which are ſometimes excited in the giddy of both ſexes, from the bloom of a cheek, or the ſparkling of an eye, or other advantages equally adventitious of the ſacred name of love! "Virtue "(ſays Mrs. Brooke, the author of Julia "Mandeville) may command eſteem, "underſtanding and talents admiration,

" beauty a tranſient deſire; but it is ſen-
" ſibility alone can inſpire love." It is certain there is in ſome minds a certain attraction, a congeniality—were I not a materialiſt, I ſhould ſay, a recognition of ſouls, which glows in the features, and moves the heart with a ſort of electrical ſympathy. Many I believe will not underſtand me: but this I cannot help. The feelings of Melville were of the kind I have been endeavouring to deſcribe. While gazing on Cecilia, and liſtening to a converſation at which our modern beaus would have yawned, time glided away imperceptibly, and the village clock ſtruck ten. Melville ſtarted and looked round him. Grey miſts had veiled the mountains; he felt it would be improper to prolong his viſit, and he ſighed at the conviction. The paſt ſcene appeared a viſion, and he thought it ſcarce a moment ſince he firſt entered a ſociety, ſo congenial to his mind. The hilarity which had brightened his aſpect, inſtantly faded, and he ſilently withdrew, after Theron had given him a hoſpitable and general invitation to his farm; and the charming Cecilia

lia complacently ſmiling, looked her wiſhes for his compliance with her uncle's requeſt. As he returned home, the moon roſe in unclouded majeſty, and "walking in her "brightneſs"—

"Shadowy ſet off the face of things."

The air was perfectly ſtill, and the ſoftened ſoul of Melville diſſolved in tender melancholy. Something devotional chaſtened his feelings; he was enamoured with virtue, and he raiſed his thoughts to the Being, whoſe eſſence is love, and "poured his ſoul in tranſport,"

"Which the fire of love approving heard,
"And call'd it good."

Nor had the marked attentions of Melville been unobſerved by Cecilia. She had retired to reſt, with a heart more ſerene than uſual; and though ſhe ſlept not till towards morning, her viſions were light and airy; and indiſtinct, though ſoothing hopes cheered her depreſſed ſpirits. She aroſe early and hailed the returning ſun with grateful pleaſure; ſhe quitted her chamber to court the cooling

cooling breeze of the morning, and inhale the early fragrance. She marked the vivid glow that impurpled the Eaſt, the ſoft dews that glittered on the ſpray, the golden grain that waved in the valley: and ſhe bent in reverence and adoration. Unconſcious of her path, ſhe wandered towards the hermitage, and liſtened in a penſive attitude to the murmuring of the waters that flowed at her feet. She recollected the converſation of the preceding evening, and again ſaw in idea the ingenuous and ſenſible countenance of Melville, and remembered, that while gazing on her, his features became more animated,—and his accents more tender. She bluſhed, and the conſciouſneſs of doing ſo, deepened the ſuffuſion. She endeavoured to check the riſing emotion, and recalling her ſcattered thoughts, returned to the houſe, with a full determination to ſubject, for the future, a too lively imagination to the ſober control of reaſon.

On the next Sunday, being a day of leiſure from buſineſs, Melville again directed his ſteps to the hoſpitable manſion of Theron. He

He arrived at the village, juſt as the cottagers, in their beſt array, were proceeding to a plain neat building, on the brow of a hill, to attend to the exhortations of their venerable teacher. Melville mixed in the throng, unobſerved by Theron, who had choſen for the ſubject of the morning's diſcourſe, the anſwer of Agrippa to Paul,—"Almoſt thou perſuadeſt me to be a Chriſtian." Melville liſtened attentively: he felt himſelf intereſted in the ſubject; Chriſtianity had never before appeared to him ſo amiable; the ſimple and affecting eloquence of the ſpeaker, the rural, yet decent appearance, and compoſed behaviour of the hearers, exhibited a picture of patriarchal ſimplicity; he ſhed tears, but they were tears of ineffable delight. He wiſhed to be convinced, and to ſhake off the painful ſcepticiſm, that ſtill haraſſed his mind. His preſence and agitation were not unnoticed by Cecilia, and ſhe involuntarily raiſed her eyes to heaven, and addreſſed a fervent petition in his behalf. This perhaps may be enthuſiaſm, but people of ardent tempers do not always ſtop critically to anylize their feelings.

ſeelings. After the ſervice, Cecilia touched the organ, and accompanied the grateful aſpirations of a happy people, rendered virtuous by the benevolent exertions of their excellent paſtor. On the concluſion of the hymn, Melville joined his friends: his heart was full, and his eyes gliſtened; they took no notice of his emotions, but accompanied him in a walk round the village. Every eye ſparkled at their approach, and every voice bleſſed them. Cecilia had inſtituted a ſchool, and decreed various little rewards for induſtry and docility; her pupils crowded to ſalute her as ſhe paſſed, and preſented her with the faireſt flowers of their gardens. The heart of Melville, to whom theſe ſcenes were equally novel and affecting, throbbed tumultuouſly; the tenderneſs he felt for this amiable woman had ſomething of religious reverence in it; he attempted not to ſpeak, his ſenſations were—"for words too deli-"cate."

Every interval of commerce he now ſpent at the farm of Theron, and his affection for

Cecilia

Cecilia grew every hour more pure and animated; at length he determined to overcome the timidity, that at the moment of utterance, had a thouſand times repreſſed the avowal of his feelings. One day finding Theron alone, he ventured to diſcloſe to him the ſentiments he had long delighted to cheriſh. You are right, my friend, replied Theron, Cecilia is an invaluable treaſure, and you are the only man whom I know that is deſerving of her; I heartily wiſh you ſucceſs, and will introduce you to her; but I can do no more; in a point ſo momentous I dare not influence her. Saying which, he took him by the hand, and led him to the library of his niece. Cecilia (ſaid he, as he entered) I have brought you a friend, of whom you know my ſentiments: —he loves you,—and you are worthy of his affection;—conſult your own heart, and behave to him with your accuſtomed frankneſs. Theron turned, and was about to quit the room. Stop, Sir; (replied his niece, while a faint bluſh overſpread her face) your abſence cannot be neceſſary; I am incapable of cauſing a moment's ſuſpence that

I do

I do not feel: ſhe heſitated—and turning to Melville, I do not pretend, ſaid ſhe, to deny that the judgment of my dear paternal friend has ever all the influence over me, which it ſo truly deſerves; but the favourable ſentiments I have for ſome time paſt entertained for you,—you owe only to your own merits. Melville ſeized with tranſport the hand ſhe offered him, and a flood of tears relieved his overcharged heart.

The venerable Theron rejoiced in the felicity of his children; and their union waited only the adjuſting of ſome preliminary affairs, intereſting to all parties. During this interval, the bankruptcy of a houſe, which involved the greater part of Melville's property, overwhelmed him in confuſion and anguiſh, the cup of joy ſeemed again daſhed from his lips, and he gave himſelf up to deſpair. He had abſented himſelf for more than a fortnight from the farm, when a ſervant arrived in breathleſs diſorder, and informed him that the good Theron was at the point of death, and wiſhed earneſtly to ſpeak to him before he expired. My God! (exclaimed

(exclaimed Melville in an agony) let us loſe no time,—let us fly this moment! As he paſſed through the village, an air of conſternation ſat on every face, all employments were ſuſpended, and every one wept as for a beloved parent. Theron, in endeavouring to ſave a child that had fallen into the river, had plunged after it down the ſtream, and remaining too long in the water, had on his coming out been ſeized with cold ſhiverings, followed by an acute pain in his ſtomach, that terminated in an inflammation, and a mortification had now taken place.—All medical aid was vain. On entering the chamber, Melville found his friend ſupported on a couch: Cecilia knelt beſide him, and wiped the damps of death from his forehead,—her hair was diſhevelled,—her dreſs negligent,—and her countenance pale and fixed. Theron held in one hand a New Teſtament, the other graſped that of his niece. Come hither, my friend (ſaid he, on ſeeing Melville) and learn how a Chriſtian dies. A faint, but ſweet ſmile, beamed in his features,—he went on in a languid, but tranquil tone of voice.—

Why

Why have you ſtaid from us ſo long? The failure in your affairs was a trifle, the wants of nature are but few; with œconomy and induſtry, we have ſufficient to ſatisfy them; but I perceive the delicacy of your love, though I do not approve it. Cecilia looked on Melville with more ſeverity than he had ever before ſeen in her countenance.—Delicacy, ſaid ſhe, my father, is too ſoft a term—the pride of Melville has been injurious to our tenderneſs. We will not now recriminate, ſaid Theron, I ſee in the ingenuous features of my friend, contrition and ſorrow. In this ſolemn moment receive from me, while I have the power of beſtowing, the two moſt valuable treaſures I ever poſſeſſed:—This dear girl has been the comfort of my declining years; may ſhe be the ornament and the ſolace of your future life! and this book has taught me how to live,—and how to die,—"I have "finiſhed my courſe, and henceforth is laid "up for me a crown of righteouſneſs."—He was ſilent. Melville took with one hand that of Cecilia, and with the other the New Teſtament, and held them alternately to his boſom.

boſom. Exerting his laſt remaining ſtrength, Theron claſped them both to his heart, —raiſed his eyes,—ejaculated a prayer,— bleſſed them,—and expired. Cecilia fainted. —Melville bending over the remains of his friend, repeated with fervor, "May I die " the death of the righteous."

The villagers crowded to the funeral of their benefactor, and watered the clods of the valley with pious and grateful tears. The ſolemnity of the paſt ſcenes deeply affected the ſenſible heart of Melville, he ſettled his mercantile affairs, reſigned his buſineſs, and after his union with Cecilia, applied himſelf to the cultivation of their farm, and devoted his leiſure hours to the ſtudy of the Scriptures. The good ſenſe, and genuine piety of Cecilia, greatly aſſiſted his reſearches, and he became a Chriſtian on firm and rational convictions, and determined to take up the miniſterial character after the example of his departed friend. On the next Sunday he put in practice this intention, to the great ſatisfaction of an affectionate and grateful people.

A gentle peace now dawned upon his mind,—his heart expanded with joy,—the buſineſs of agriculture, the offices of benevolence, and the purſuits of literature, engaged his whole time;—all which his beloved Cecilia participated and heightened. At her requeſt he ſent for his children from England, and ſhe delighted to form their young and ductile minds. As their family increaſed, they ſaw with pleaſure—

" Every day, ſoft as it roll'd along,
" Shew ſome new charm;
" The fathers luſtre, and the mothers bloom."

Sitting under the ſhade of their plantations, while their children ſported around them,—the dignity of conſcious rectitude, and the ineffable thrill of virtuous tenderneſs irradiated their features, and elevated their hearts to the ſource of all felicity,—who had led them " in green paſtures, beſide the " ſtill waters,"—and " conducted them in " paths of pleaſantneſs and peace."

Adieu, my friend. My letter is already of an immoderate length; I am fatigued, and will add no more, but that I remain, &c.

No. VI.

No. VI.

To Miſs ——.

My dear Elizabeth,

IN compliance with your requeſt, and encouraged by the entertainment you aſſure me you received from my little hiſtory of Melville and Serena, I proceed to give you ſome account of the younger daughters of Sempronia, who were not more fortunate than their ſiſter, and whoſe misfortunes originated in the ſame ſource, a narrow and defective education.

Martha, the ſecond daughter, married a Mr. C. a reputable tradeſman, who making no pretenſions to refinement himſelf, was not diſguſted with the narrow views, and vulgar dialect of his lady; who, with a mind as uninformed as Serena's, was far from poſſeſſing the ſame gentle and placid diſpoſition. On the contrary, her naturally ſtrong paſſions, and volatile temper, ſeemed to have acquired additional force from the painful conſtraint

ſhe had been obliged reluctantly to ſubmit to, under the arbitrary juriſdiction of her mother. She married to gain her liberty, without feeling any particular tenderneſs or eſteem for the man to whom ſhe gave her hand. Coercive meaſures may have a reſtraining effect for a time, but can never ſubdue an untractable ſpirit: it is only by engaging the affections, and enlarging the underſtanding, that the heart can be meliorated, or principles be formed; for like a bow forcibly bent, the mind recoils from oppreſſion with elaſtic power. The huſband of Martha, a man of probity, and plain common ſenſe, wiſhed to find in a wife a cheerful companion, and an œconomical manager of his domeſtic affairs. Martha's lively manner, and ſtrict education, afforded him the moſt flattering expectations, that he had made a ſuitable choice.

He gave way to her plan of diſſipation for the firſt month after their marriage, without remonſtrance, as he imagined that after the diſplay of her bridal ornaments, and the round of congratulatory viſits, uſual

on

on ſuch occaſions, that ſhe would aſſume a matron-like behaviour, and engage in the employments of domeſtic life; but, to his great mortification, he ſoon began to find that he had deceived himſelf: one ſcheme of amuſement prepared the way for another; the circle of their acquaintance became every day more extenſive; and while he was engaged in his warehouſe and compting-houſe, Mrs. C. was all over the town, in the park, at the theatres, at card-parties, and aſſemblies; and returned at all hours fatigued and exhauſted in the purſuit of thoſe pleaſures, which from their novelty, and former prohibition, were ſought by her with additional ardor and ſpirit. In vain Mr. C. entreated, expoſtulated, and even threatened; when ſhe could no longer prevail on him by artful flattery and careſſes, ſhe awed him into ſilence by the violence of her temper; he was fond of peace, and too frequently purchaſed it at an expenſive rate.

Mrs. C. became a mother, and her huſband now hoped the cares of her nurſery would engage her attention, and have a more

powerful influence over her mind, than all his hitherto ineffectual remonſtrances. For a few weeks, his hopes ſeemed realized; but Martha had none of that refinement, which by aſſociating a thouſand tender circumſtances, gives additional poignancy to natural affections, and binds them more cloſely to the heart. She ſoon became tired of performing the duties of a nurſe to her offſpring: when a girl, ſhe had imagined herſelf fond of children, becauſe ſhe had conſidered them as a ſort of live dolls, and they ſupplied the place of baby-houſe amuſements, which ſhe had juſt been perſuaded to reſign. But the attention they now required, appeared a very different affair; to ſacrifice her reſt by night, and her liberty in the day, to watch over them in ſickneſs, and perform the numberleſs tender and delicate attentions, neceſſary to their fragile age,—was an inſupportable fatigue, of which ſhe fancied herſelf incapable; ſhe perſuaded Mr. C. that the delicacy of her conſtitution incapacitated her for performing the duty of a mother, and prevailed on him to ſuffer her to reſign the child to the care of an hireling,

ling, where it ſoon after periſhed by the ſmall-pox, which raged in the neighbourhood, and which it caught in the natural way: for Mrs. C. had an invincible prejudice againſt inoculation, and all her prejudices were paſſions; for taking up her opinions without examination, ſhe prided herſelf upon ever obſtinately adhering to them.

Martha's manner of life began to affect the income of her huſband; for ſhe had contracted ſeveral debts, which he had been obliged to diſcharge. He now earneſtly wiſhed for a ſeparation, for his wife was incapable of attending to reaſon, and was ſeldom at home, but in the intervals of laſſitude. Her temper naturally acrimonious, was ſtill more embittered by his ſharp and repeated expoſtulations. They met only to quarrel, and parted with mutual contempt and averſion; till he at laſt came to a determination to give up trade, to collect his effects, and retire into a diſtant country, and ſhould his wife refuſe to accompany him, to allow her a ſtipulated ſeparate maintenance, and

to inſiſt on her returning to reſide with her mother. This propoſal ſhe abſolutely rejected, and after much unavailing recrimination, agreed to accompany him into the country. He took care to reſide in a remote houſe, in a village ſituated as far as poſſible from any market-town; when Martha, in deſpair at being torn from London and its amuſements, took an unhappy reſolution of drowning reflection by conſtant inebriation, which, in a ſhort time, brought on a complication of diſorders, that terminated her uſeleſs, and wretched exiſtence,—and relieved her huſband from a ruinous, and worthleſs companion.

The younger daughters, Ann and Charlotte, poſſeſſing fewer perſonal attractions than their elder ſiſters, remained unmarried. Ann, naturally of a gloomy and timid diſpoſition, rendered ſtill more ſplenetic by an infirm conſtitution, accidentally hearing a charity-ſermon preached at their pariſh church, by a popular Methodiſt teacher, was ſtruck by the vehemence of his manner, and alarmed by the ſeverity of his doctrines,

trines. Her religious ideas (if ideas they could be called) had been taken upon truſt, without ever once ſuſpecting that religion is a perſonal concern, in which, as every individual would be accountable only for himſelf, neither the ſtate, or our fore-fathers could have any poſſible right of interference: ſhe had no notion that belief muſt be founded upon evidence, and conſiſted in a real aſſent to a clear propoſition; and being no mathematician, took for granted, that the dogmatiſt who erected his own judgment into an infallible tribunal, muſt be divinely inſpired, and could be liable to no miſtake. Her pride was flattered by the fancy of ſpiritual ſuperiority, and her ſpleen gratified by drawing a narrow circle, and ſaying, "Surely we are the people, and wiſdom "ſhall die with us." The fact is, bigotry is ever the child of ignorance, and the cultivation of the underſtanding is the only radical cure for it. Mr. Locke, ſpeaking of perſons who contract their views, and who conſequently are frequently miſtaken, obſerves, "The reaſon whereof is, they con-"verſe with but one ſort of men; they read

"but

" but one ſort of books; they will not
" come to the hearing of but one ſort of
" notions. The truth is, they canton out
" to themſelves a little Goſhen in the
" intellectual world, where light ſhines,
" and, as they conclude, day bleſſes them;
" but the reſt of that vaſt expanſion they
" give up to night and darkneſs, and ſo
" avoid coming near it. They have a
" pretty traffick with known correſpon-
" dents in ſome little creek, with which
" they content themſelves; but will not
" venture out in the great ocean of know-
" ledge, to ſurvey the riches which nature
" has ſtored other parts with, no leſs
" genuine, no leſs ſolid, no leſs uſeful than
" what has fallen to their lot, in the ad-
" mired plenty, and ſelf-ſufficiency of their
" own little ſtock, which to them con-
" tains whatever is good in the univerſe."

The want of information is generally accompanied by proportional preſumption and tenacity. A truly great mind, who has ſtudied the human heart, is ſenſible that diverſity of opinions are eſſential to our nature,

ture, and ariſe out of different temperaments, different degrees of intellect, and of knowledge, various habits, aſſociations, and prejudices. Faith is not a magical word (as ſome ſeem to ſuppoſe) but the reſult of that degree of evidence, which is proportioned to the capacity of every individual. Whoſe then can be the ſtandard ſoul?

" It is much eaſier (ſaid the late amiable " and excellent Dr. Price) to ſay what is not, " than what is truth." " Perhaps, he adds, " ſome of my ideas may be wrong, but " ſhould that be the caſe, I am under no " apprehenſion of any ill conſequences; " being perſuaded that my intereſt in the " redemption by Jeſus Chriſt depends not " on the juſtneſs of my conceptions of it, " or the rectitude of my judgment con- " cerning it, but on the ſincerity of my " heart. Indeed, I ſeldom feel much of that " ſatisfaction which ſome derive, from being " ſure they have found out truth; but I " derive great comfort from believing that " error, when involuntary, is innocent, and " that all that is required of me as a con-

" dition

" dition of acceptance, is faithfully endea-
" vouring to find out, and to practiſe truth
" and right."

All Chriſtians accord in the leading facts of Chriſtianity; and if they would agree to reaſon differently about the nature of thoſe facts, with mutual candor and charity, no harm could poſſibly happen, and great good might enſue; as ſuch a fair and cool diſcuſſion, if uniformity of opinion were poſſible, would be the moſt likely means of promoting and ſecuring it. For when the fourneſs of bigotry, and the fury of party-rage were laid aſide, an obſtinate adherence to emphatical words and phraſes would gradually give way, and all men riſing into ideas, and imbibing that ſpirit of love and good-will, which is the eſſence of the goſpel, would convert the Chriſtian church into a paradiſaical ſtate, and win the nations to righteouſneſs, by letting their " light
" ſhine before the world, ſo that men ſeeing
" their good works, would glorify their
" God." Nor will the religion of Chriſt ever be univerſally propagated, till this benevolent

benevolent and liberal ſpirit diſtinguiſhes its profeſſed diſciples.

The teſtimonies which our anceſtors gave to the ſincerity of their principles, by no means invalidate ours. The world, like every individual, has its progreſſion from infancy to old age: the preſent age is more mature than the laſt. The reformers did much, we have done more, and more ſtill remains to be done by future ages. Every doctrine that ſhuns inveſtigation, excites in us a ſuſpicion of its origin; the truth muſt be a gainer, by free unreſtrained inquiry, and in the end "approve itſelf to the conſcience of "every man;" and like the pure gold, come out uninjured from a trial by fire, which can conſume only the droſs that obſcured its luſtre. Should the horrid idea ſo injurious to the perfections of God be really true, that we ſhall be judged at the laſt day by our opinions, as well as practice (opinions which can be valuable only in proportion as they produce virtue) what conſiderate man would dare to erect his own into a ſtandard of faith? and where ſo many wiſe men differ,

lay

lay claim to infallibility?—But to return from this digreſſion.

Ann, now become a proſelyte to the rigid ſupralapſarian ſyſtem, grew every day more narrow and moroſe; the moſt innocent cheerfulneſs ſhe conſidered as unpardonable levity, her days were conſumed in attending lectures and ſermons, and her reſt broken at night by ſuperſtitious terrors. Her former acquaintance ſhe regarded with horror, as in a ſtate of reprobation; or, if ſhe vouchſafed to enter into converſation with them, repreſenting the Deity after her own gloomy conceptions, ſhe falſely deſcribed the paths of piety as ſtrewed with thorns and briars, ſo that deſpairing of ideal perfection, they were ready to give up all virtue as unattainable. Incapable of generalizing ideas, and comparing Scripture with itſelf, ſhe underſtood nothing of the gentle ſpirit of the goſpel, which teaches that without charity, all other ſanctimonious pretenſions are as a "ſounding braſs, and a tinkling cymbal." The repeated precepts of love and confidence in God, kindneſs to our neighbour,

purity,

purity, and benevolence of heart, were not ſufficiently ſublime and myſtical to engage the notice of our devotee: particular figurative expreſſions, clothed in the ſymbolical language of the early periods of the world, engroſſed her whole attention. She overlooked the deſcription of the day of final retribution, repreſented with majeſtic ſimplicity by the Saviour of the world: "I "was hungry, and ye fed me; ſick, and in "priſon, and ye viſited me, &c." And ſuppoſed that ſalvation would be the reward, not of right conduct, but of ſound opinions.

Theſe aſſociations continually dwelt on, at length, from the conſtant preſſure of the ſame ideas, had a phyſical effect on the brain, and produced that ſtate of nervous irritability,—that tends to hypochondriac melancholy; a ſhattered conſtitution became yet more impaired; and this unhappy victim to groſs ignorance, and abject ſuperſtition, became a prey to that dreadful train of nervous affections, which admit of no cure, and by which the vital powers are conſumed in cruel agitation, and inſupportable terrors.

Charlotte,

Charlotte, the younger daughter, though not poſſeſſed of that ſuperior genius, which notwithſtanding all local diſadvantages will educate itſelf, was not devoid either of capacity, or taſte; but being kept from books, and confined to the ſociety of narrow-minded and illiterate people, ſhe made but little improvement: for—

" Without enlivening ſuns, and genial ſhowers,
" And ſhelter from the blaſt, in vain we hope
" The tender plant ſhould rear its blooming head,
" Or yield the harveſt promis'd in its ſpring."

AKENSIDE.

Precluded from mental purſuits, her ingenuity could diſplay itſelf only in drawing the pattern, and ſhading the colours for a carpet, or a fire-ſcreen; and her taſte in fancying the ornaments to decorate her perſon. In ſuch, or ſimilar occupations, ſhe ſpent her early youth in innocence, and tolerable tranquillity, and amuſed herſelf by forming many little plans (ſhould ſhe ever change her ſituation) for the diſpoſition of the nuptial finery, the furniſhing of her houſe, and the ſtyle of her equipage. In

theſe

theſe dreams her youth paſſed away; every riſing beauty became her rival; and every charm, as it faded, gave a pang to her heart, which was alternately harrowed by jealouſy, by envy, by diſappointed hope, and unavailing regret.

Fond of diſtinction, ſhe knew not how to reſign with a grace thoſe obſequious attentions, ſo flattering, and too often ſo pernicious to the young female mind. She had no acquirements to ſubſtitute in the place of the allurements of youth and ſprightlineſs, and ſhe found herſelf, by degrees, neglected, and alone in a crowd. She had many acquaintance, but no friends; for intellect and virtue alone capacitate for friendſhip. By virtue, I do not mean the mere abſence of groſs vice: virtue is active—"It is "ſenſe, and ſpirit with humanity," and muſt be the reſult of reflection, and fixed principle. The weak and the ignorant can never be properly termed virtuous; they may have a happy temperament—("But mere "good-nature is a fool") and if they chance to fall into good hands, may be preſerved

from any glaring miſconduct, and paſs decently through life; but like the camelion, the colour of their minds muſt depend entirely on the ſurrounding circumſtances; and even in the moſt favourable ſituations, "the "ſpaniel fool (as is obſerved by one of the "periodical writers) will frequently turn "mule fool." Every evil, both phyſical and moral, may be ultimately traced up to limited faculties, and the want of knowledge.

Charlotte found no reſource in the company of her ſiſter, who entered not into the ſocial ſpirit of Chriſtianity, but paſſed her time in a monaſtic ſecluſion from the world. This unfortunate woman, who knew not how to throw a luſtre over her declining years by the dignity, which intellectual attainments beſtow, vainly endeavoured to conceal the ravages of time by affecting the gaiety of youth; the very attempt, as it beſpoke the vacant mind, pointed the "bitter ſcorn of "grinning ridicule." Without reſources in herſelf, ſolitude ſhe found intolerable, and ſought a relief from the wearineſs of *ennui*

in

in viſiting from houſe to houſe, in watching the conduct of her neighbours, and circulating the anecdotes ſhe collected in her rambles; and, though this was done without malice, merely to enliven the inſipidity of a commerce, where neither the heart, nor the underſtanding had any ſhare, it involved her in many inconvenient and diſagreeable circumſtances. At the card table, ſhe tried to beguile the tedious hours by the vivid emotions, which gaming ſeldom fails to excite; but unſkilled in the ſcience, her temper became ſoured, and her fortune injured; till, at length, mere wearineſs for want of a ſufficiently intereſting purſuit, and diſguſt with life, brought on a languor that terminated in a jaundice and ſlow fever, and delivered her from the dreadful vacuity of having nothing to do, to hope, or to fear. The excellent Dr. Prieſtley, in his treatiſe on education, juſtly ſays, that "The mind ſuf-
"fers more in a ſtate of ſuſpenſe and un-
"certainty, how to get the time over, than
"in almoſt any exertion whatever;" and that this "is perhaps more frequently the
"cauſe of ſuicide, from life becoming ab-

" ſolutely inſupportable, than all the other
" cauſes of it put together."

May theſe examples, my dear young friend, ſtimulate you to ſuch an improvement of your faculties as will elevate, and adorn your character in this world, and capacitate you either for active or contemplative life; and alſo fit you for a higher ſituation in a future period of exiſtence. It is time for degraded woman to aſſert her right to reaſon, in this general diffuſion of light and knowledge. The frivolity and voluptuouſneſs, in which they have hitherto been educated, have had a large ſhare in the general corruption of manners; this frivolity the ſenſible vindicator of our rights juſtly attributes to the entire dependence, in which we are trained. Young women without fortunes, if they do not chance to marry (and this is not a marrying age) have ſcarce any other reſources than in ſervitude, or proſtitution. I never ſee, without indignation, thoſe trades, which ought to be appropriated only to women, almoſt entirely engroſſed by men, haberdaſhery, millinery, &c.

even

even mantua-making.—Fine citizens and ſoldiers this race of delicate, contemptible beings would make, if called out for the defence of their country!

Thoſe who have families of daughters, without the means of amply providing for them, ſhould endeavour to reſtrain that ariſtocratical taſte for ſtyle and expence, which is at preſent ſo prevalent in this great metropolis, and to give them ſtrength of mind and body, ſo that they may be accuſtomed to regulate their conduct by reaſon, to contract their wants, to act upon a plan, and to exert their talents upon every trying occaſion. Fortitude, and firmneſs of character, are equally neceſſary and becoming in women, as in men, and are calculated to ſtrengthen, not to extinguiſh, the humane and gentle virtues. Exceſſive and unreſtrained ſenſibility is ever ſelfiſh; properly regulated it will give energy and intereſt to virtue; but flattered and foſtered, is but a more ſpecious name for imbecility, and in the end contracts the heart, and ren-

ders it callous to every thing beyond the narroweſt of all narrow circles.

I am, with ſincerity, yours.

No. VII.

To Mrs. ———.

BE not too much alarmed, my friend, at your daughter's predilection for novels and romances; nor think of reſtraining her by authority from this her favourite purſuit; as by ſo doing, you would probably loſe her confidence, without correcting her taſte; in which caſe the miſchief might indeed become ſerious. She is now advancing towards womanhood, and will expect to be treated no longer as a child, but as a reaſonable being; and this expectation is juſt. The reciprocal duties between parents and children, though they ought never to ceaſe, yet change their nature at different periods of life. A good mother, who has both by example

ample and precept trained her offspring in the principles and practice of virtue, will have nothing to fear from this change. While ſhe proves herſelf by her whole conduct the friend of her children, and entitles herſelf to their love and reverence, her influence will be unbounded, becauſe the habits of obedience, which were acquired in childhood, will be ſtrengthened by reaſon and affection; and her empire will be over the heart and underſtanding. A diſpoſition to act in oppoſition to coercive and arbitrary meaſures, has been frequently attributed to a perverſeneſs in human nature: this appears to me a falſe and injurious notion. Does it not rather indicate that love of freedom, and generous diſdain of impoſition, that ever glow in an elevated and noble mind? I ſhould tremble for the future moral conduct of the child, whom force and blows only could reſtrain from doing what was wrong; ſhould he ever arrive at maturity, if he break not the laws of his country, it will be merely becauſe he is with-held by ſordid and ſelfiſh motives.

I have ſcarce ever known an amiable young mind that has not been a little tinctured, with what "the ſons of intereſt deem "romance." If the firſt ſteps into life are marked by coldneſs, and caution, ſuch a character will never poſſeſs any other than negative virtues, though it may incur few hazards.

"Youth's the lovely ſource of generous foibles."

Where nothing is riſqued, nothing can be gained. We ſhall certainly be ſubjected to diſappointment, by forming fluſhed and ardent expectations; and find perhaps a brake of thorns, where we expected a parterre of flowers. Yet, "the exertion of our own "faculties (ſays a ſenſible writer) will be the "bleſſed fruit of diſappointed hope."

My revered, and deceaſed friend Mr. Robinſon, of Cambridge, writing to me on the advantages of early affliction, obſerves "that, before he met with it in Shakeſpear, "he had been convinced that—

"There was ſome ſoul of good, in things evil,
"Would men obſervingly diſtil it out."

He

He goes on to add,—"I am of opinion, that "if it be good for mankind to bear the "yoke, it is chiefly ſo by bearing it in "their youth. Notice the moſt of thoſe, "who have grown to maturity without "any exerciſes of this kind! Abſolute "ſtrangers to themſelves, and to the world "in which they live! the latent powers of "their own minds unknown, diamonds in "rocks unconvulſed! Strangers to the feel-"ings of others, and never impregnated "with ſympathy, the ferment of the ſoul! "Nothing is ſo conducive to the knowledge "of God, to the dignity of man, to the "world in which we live, to that to which "we are going, as a ſmarting courſe of "providential diſcipline."

But the age of chivalry (as a certain rhetoritician laments) is no more! The preſent race of young people are too vapid, and too diſſipated to be captivated by ſublime deſcriptions of heroic virtue; and too much engroſſed by the important purſuit, of varying their outward appearance with the conſtant fluctuation of mode, to have leiſure to

attend

attend to the dangerous refinements of ſentiment. Yet do not miſtake me, nor ſuppoſe that I mean to recommend the indiſcriminate peruſal of romances and novels; on the contrary, I think with you, that the generality of works of this kind are frivolous, if not pernicious; though there are undoubtedly, many exceptions. But the love of the marvellous, or of extraordinary, and unexpected coincidences, is natural to young minds, that have any degree of energy and fancy. I would only wiſh them to be fond of books, and I ſhould have no doubt of being able to lead their taſte, from the purſuit of mere amuſement, to ſolid improvement. Awaken but the deſire of information, and the gradation from purſuing "the mazes of ſome wondrous tale," up to the higheſt degree of intereſting and uſeful knowledge, is eaſy and natural. Accuſtom your daughters by a cheerful and amiable frankneſs, to do nothing without conſulting you; let them read with you, and let the choice of their books be free. Converſe with them on the merits of the various authors, and accuſtom them to critical,

and

and literary diſcuſſions. They will ſoon be emulous of gaining your approbation by entering into your ideas, and will be aſhamed of being pleaſed with what you ridicule as abſurd, and out of nature, or diſapprove, as having an improper and immoral tendency. You have only to perſuade them that you have a confidence in their principles, and good ſenſe, and they will be eager to juſtify your favourable opinion. The human heart in early life, before the world, the mean, unfeeling, ſelfiſh world, breaks in upon its gay miſtakes, is naturally grateful, and ſuſceptible of lively impreſſions from kind and generous treatment. This ſenſibility properly cheriſhed, and cultivated, may be made to produce the nobleſt fruits. I often ſhudder, when I obſerve in large families the little attention that is paid to the minds of the children, becauſe by an education equally defective, the parents are themſelves incapacitated for this moſt important charge. "How ſhould a woman "unuſed to reflection, be capable of edu- "cating her children? How will ſhe be "able to diſcern what is proper for them?

"How

" How ſhall ſhe train them to virtues, to
" which ſhe is herſelf a ſtranger, or to any
" kind of merit of which ſhe has no idea?
" She will only know how to ſooth, or to
" menace them; to render them either in-
" ſolent or timorous; ſhe will either make
" them mannerly monkeys, or wild idle
" boys; but they never will ſhew any
" marks of good ſenſe, or behave as
" amiable children." Rouſſeau.

I cannot help, on every occaſion, joining my feeble efforts to thoſe of the admirable aſſertor of female rights, in endeavouring to ſtimulate, and rouſe my ſex from the ſtate of mental degradation, and bondage, in which they have ſo long been held. Like monarchs, we have been flattered into imbecility, by thoſe who wiſh to take advantage of our weakneſs. It was ſaid by Chriſtiana, Queen of Sweden, that ſhe ſought the company of men, merely becauſe they were not women. A ſevere, and pointed ſarcaſm! Be not, my fair friends, and companions, ſatisfied with the poor praiſe of being pretty; the empire of beauty gives

but

but a tranſient power; no ſooner has it arrived at maturity, than it begins to droop and fade. Entitle yourſelves to reſpect and admiration, by cultivating thoſe virtues, that will improve with time, and will ſhed a luſtre over ſickneſs and age, when every external charm is fled. Remember, you are born for immortality (not merely for the ſolace of man, but for thoſe regions where there will be neither marrying, nor giving in marriage;) and that you muſt give an account of the talents committed to your charge! Pardon this digreſſion.

Your Elizabeth, you tell me, is reading the Sorrows of Werter (notwithſtanding your remonſtrances) and ſeems much affected by it: at which I am not ſurpriſed. The flowery, and enthuſiaſtic ſtyle, in which it is written, is calculated to catch the imagination, and move the paſſions; but when this tumult of the ſenſes ſubſides, and we calmly reflect on the events, by which we have ſuffered ourſelves to be agitated, we bluſh to find we have been ſympathiſing with the extravagant, and faſtidious diſ-

treſſes

treſſes of a madman, made up of pride, caprice, and paſſion; full of erroneous ſentiments, ſophiſtical notions, and real vices; ſlightly varniſhed over by ſuperficial, and fanciful perfections; indulging without reſtraint, an impetuous and criminal attachment, from which he makes no efforts to free himſelf; conſuming the ſeaſon for active life in enervating indolence; juſtifying, and allowing himſelf in flights of vehement and extravagant paſſions, by which he is ever on the brink of the moſt fatal, and cruel outrages. Yet this man ſo weak, ſo wicked! dignifies his exceſſes by the names of ſentiment, delicacy, and tenderneſs; and deliberately talks of entering with a pure heart, into the preſence of his Creator, while arraigning his diſpenſations, and contemning his power, by reſolving to terminate his own exiſtence, and impiouſly—" To pluck from " God's right hand, his inſtruments of " death." *

You

* Some years ago, when " the Sorrows of Werter" were a ſubject of general converſation, from the number of elegant engravings, which it had occaſioned, I wrote ſome

You aſk, if I would adviſe you to put Richardſon's Clariſſa into the hands of your daughters, which they ſeem very deſirous of peruſing? If we may judge of the merit of a work by the effects which it produces on the mind, I confeſs, this is a book, which I would recommend to the attention of any young perſons under my care. I read it repeatedly in very early life, and ever found my mind more pure, more chaſtened, more elevated after the peruſal of it. The extreme youth and beauty, fine talents, and exalted piety of the heroine, render her character, I allow, ſomething like the fine ideal beauty of the ancients. Yet in contemplating the perfect model, the imagination is raiſed, and the ſoul affected; we perceive the pencil of genius, and while we admire, catch the glorious enthuſiaſm. The characters are well preſerved, and the epiſ-

ſome obſervations upon it, which were inſerted by a friend in the Univerſal Magazine, with my name affixed to them. A little time after, I found them to my great ſurpriſe (with ſome additions) at the concluſion of a new edition of the work, without being marked as a quotation, or any acknowledgment being made from whence they were taken.

tolary

tolary ſtyle of the ſeveral writers marked with peculiar diſtinction. It is generally (and perhaps not without reaſon) thought too prolix, but I own, I ever felt myſelf more intereſted from this minuteneſs, and perceived, in the nicer ſhades and touches, the hand of a maſter. The cloſing ſcenes of the lives of Clariſſa, Belton, Sinclair, and Lovelace, afford an affecting and admirable leſſon. The vivacity of Miſs Howe, the virtue and piety of Clariſſa, the brilliant wit of Lovelace, and the manly integrity and good ſenſe of the reformed Belford, enliven the narrative with a beautiful variety, and keep up the attention. Rouſſeau's Heloiſe ſeems written on the plan of Clariſſa; but Rouſſeau is not a writer equally pure. Of his works I would never pretend to give a cool judgment; for ſuch are the graces of his ſtyle, that it is ſcarcely poſſible to read them diſpaſſionately. The man of feeling, by the author of the Mirrour, is an elegant and pictureſque little performance; it has all the pathos of Sterne, without any of his faults. Would it not be eaſy to lead young perſons from theſe works to the periodical

Eſſays,

Eſſays, which are continually interſperſed with lively, and entertaining narrations, and where inſtruction comes in the dreſs of amuſement. From thence, the tranſition to biography would not be difficult; the Life of Petrarch, as tranſlated by Mrs. Dobſon, is an intereſting and charming work, that cannot fail to engage a youthful and ſenſible heart. Voltaire's Hiſtory of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, and Peter the Great, and Rollins's Account of Cyrus and Alexander, are highly calculated to gratify a love of the marvellous, by the uncommon and ſtriking incidents with which they abound. Sully's Memoirs of Henry the Fourth of France, and Stuart's Hiſtory of the unfortunate Mary, Queen of Scots, at once excite our ſympathy, engage our affections, and awaken our curioſity. Wraxhall's Memoirs of the Kings of France, and Voltaire's Account of the Reign of Louis the Fourteenth, are alſo compoſed in a manner to amuſe and inſtruct, and to generate a taſte for hiſtorical reading: when the mind expanded, and liberalized by tracing the fate of nations, and the riſe and fall of empires,

will proceed to ſtudies ſtill more intereſting; to philoſophical, political, moral, and religious truth. The love of information will by innumerable aſſociations, become at length almoſt diſintereſted, and every interval from active employment will be devoted to mental improvement.

"The more of mind there is in your ſoli-
"tary employments, (ſays Lavater) the
"more dignity there is in your character."
Truly wretched, and contemptible muſt be that being, who has no reſources in himſelf, but is neceſſitated to be an uſeleſs and inſupportable burthen upon ſociety!

Yet, while I would inculcate a taſte for literature on young minds, I do not wiſh them to become mere bookworms. It is of the utmoſt conſequence to habituate youth to a regular arrangement of their ſeveral employments, ſo that one duty may not ſupercede, or interfere with another. The love of order, is the foundation of every virtue. Early hours are at once beneficial to the health, and intellect, and afford

time

time for an active mind to perform the whole circle of its duties. The late Mr. Robinson, of Cambridge, in a beautiful morning exercise on industry, affixed to his village sermons, affirms, "That lying late in "bed, is an intemperance of the most per- "nicious kind; that it attacks life in its es- "sential powers, makes the blood forget its "way, and creep lazily along the veins; "relaxes the fibres, unstrings the nerves, "evaporates the animal spirits, saddens the "soul, dulls the fancy, and subdues, and stu- "pifies the man."

The Pythagorean method, of reviewing every night the actions of the past day, should in one sense be reversed, and every morning the employments of the ensuing day be regularly planned, with as little deviation as possible. By this means, all things may be conducted and accomplished without confusion, and our several duties (making allowance for human frailty) to our Creator, to ourselves, and to our fellow-creatures be discharged. I never hear people complaining of want of time, but I

ſuſpect there muſt be ſome bad manage-ment. However multifarious the buſineſs, (if we do not undertake what exceeds our capacity to perform) it may be accom-pliſhed by method and regularity; and without it, nothing will ever be performed well.

Habituate your children, if poſſible, to order in their conduct, their ſtudies, their employments, their dreſs, their furniture, and their domeſtic concerns; and they will have made more than half their way to virtue. "I have heard nothing but what is good of "ſuch an one, (obſerves Lavater) yet I "cannot love him heartily; that is, I can "have no dependence on his taſte, his love "of order, his rectitude, becauſe he ſuffers "two ornaments of dimenſions exactly "ſimilar, to hang together, the one two "inches higher than the other." This aphoriſm is founded on truth, however ri-diculous at firſt view it may appear.

Excuſe the freedom with which I have written, and be aſſured I am, &c.

No. VIII.

No. VIII.

To Mrs. ——.

My dear Madam,

THE following little narrative, will, I conceive, in ſome meaſure, exemplify the obſervations in my laſt.

Henrietta was the only daughter of Mr. L. a country gentleman of moderate fortune, who farmed his own eſtate, in a remote county in the North of England. She had loſt her mother, an excellent and amiable woman, when ſhe was yet too young to be ſenſible of her misfortune. Mr. L. whoſe time was divided between the buſineſs of agriculture, and the ſports of the field, placed his daughter at a neighbouring boarding-ſchool, to receive the education cuſtomary for young ladies of her rank; from whence at fourteen years of age, ſhe was recalled to ſuperintend the domeſtic œconomy of her father's houſe. Henrietta

poſſeſſed from nature a lively fancy, and a tender heart, and theſe diſpoſitions were foſtered by a wrong courſe of early reading; loving books with ardor from the time ſhe knew her letters, and ſeeking in them (as is natural in early youth) only that ſort of information which amuſes, and thoſe images, which by exciting vivid emotions, delight a glowing imagination; ſhe peruſed with avidity all the novels, romances, and poetry, which a circulating library in an adjacent country town afforded. But, though ſhe loved the marvellous, and the ſublime; and diſſolved into tears at the beautiful and the melancholy, heroic virtue was her paſſion; and ſhe turned with diſguſt from pictures of vice, however gloſſed over by refinement, or painted in alluring colours by genius. Her father had recommended to her when at ſchool, to pay particular attention to the French, and Italian languages; but the application which the learning of a language required, ſuited not with her natural vivacity; and ſhe could never be prevailed on to attend to them, unleſs to tranſlate a ſtory from Marmontel, or the Diable de Boiteaux. This want

want of early application, ſhe had frequent occaſion afterwards to regret, as it ſubjected her through life to many inconveniencies, and mortifications. Muſic accorded with her diſpoſition: during the ſhort time ſhe received inſtruction in this ſweet and elegant ſcience, her proficiency excited the approbation of her maſter, and as ſhe was ever ſolicitous to attain excellence, and fond of praiſe, his approbation ſtimulated her emulation. Inſolent and arbitrary control her mind revolted at: coercive meaſures could not have induced her even to follow her inclinations; but to reaſon and affection, her heart was always acceſſible; for to be treated as a reaſonable being, flattered her ambition; while wanton or unjuſt ſeverity irritated, inſtead of reclaiming her. This ſenſibility, the teachers under whoſe care ſhe had been placed while at ſchool, had too often amuſed themſelves by ſporting with; and by that means rendered a naturally quick temper, ſtill more impetuous.

She applied to muſic as to other purſuits, merely from taſte and ſentiment; and could

never be perſuaded to attempt pieces of difficult execution, but delighted to make it the vehicle of her feelings in Scotch, and other plain and ſimple ballads; ſometimes gay and ſprightly; but more frequently tender and plaintive—

" A ſolemn ſweet, and mingled air;
" 'Twas ſad by turns, by fits 'twas wild."

Warm animated minds reſemble a rich ſoil; cultivate them with care, and they will yield the nobleſt fruits; but without unremitting attention they are liable from their luxuriance to be over-run with weeds. Happy are thoſe, who acquire wiſdom by the experience of others, and, by ſo doing, avoid thoſe perilous enterprizes, in which the price of diſcretion is paid from the wreck of happineſs.

Like Mrs. Lennox's female Quixotte, Henrietta entered the world, fluſhed with fallacious hope, and viewing every object through a falſe and dazzling medium. She drew all her ideas of life from the overcharged pictures in her favourite books; ſuſceptible

ſuſceptible from nature of lively impreſſions, her heart "ſtill throbbed reſponſive to the "poets call!"

"This temper of the ſoul is ſweet, and wild;
"It ſobs and ſmiles, as ſudden as a child;
"To woes imagined, tears unfeigned gives,
"And in the poet's world of fancy lives."

Nothing particular intervened to interrupt the uniformity of Henrietta's domeſtic avocations, till her ſeventeenth year; ſhe had for ſome time ſighed to become the heroine of a romance, and vainly ſought to find a lover, and a friend reſembling the portraits coloured by her vivid imagination. A concurrence of circumſtances brought into that part of the country a youth a few years older than herſelf, with a mind equally uncorrupted by a commerce with the world, a fancy equally lively, and a heart not leſs ſenſible and tender; with a form, and countenance diſtinguiſhed for ſymmetry, and manly beauty.

"A mutual flame was quickly caught,
"Was quickly too reveal'd;
"For neither boſom lodg'd a thought,
"Which virtue keeps conceal'd."

"Suppoſe

* "Suppoſe a young perſon in the firſt "ardor of affection deifies the beloved ob- "ject! What harm can ariſe from this miſ- "taken enthuſiaſtic attachment? Perhaps "it is neceſſary for virtue firſt to appear "in a human form, to impreſs youthful "hearts; the ideal model, which a more "matured and exalted mind looks up to, "and ſhapes for itſelf, would elude their "ſight. It is natural for youth to adorn "the firſt object of its tenderneſs with every "good quality; and the emulation, pro- "duced by inexperience, brings forward the "mind, capable of forming ſuch an af- "fection."

This amiable, and ingenuous youth, in whoſe attachment ſhe now thought all her fairy viſions realized, though a favourite of nature, had been treated by fortune like a ſtep-mother. But theſe were trifling obſtacles to a heart like Henrietta's; nor could ſhe believe, that when her affections were gratified, ſhe could poſſibly feel any anxiety from conſiderations, which appeared to her

* Mrs. Wollſtonecraft's Rights of Woman.

ſo

ſo ſordid and inferior. Her lover (whom I ſhall call Edwin) had received the rudiments of a claſſical education at a grammar ſchool; expecting to have been qualified by a removal to the univerſity, for one of the learned profeſſions; for the church he ſeemed more particularly fitted, by a ſerious turn of mind, and an ardent love of literature. But the ſudden death of his father, who had left his family in narrow circumſtances, precluded every hope of this nature; and after revolving in his mind various plans for his future eſtabliſhment in life, he determined to ſolicit a relation who had intereſt in the India-Houſe, to be appointed a writer in the ſervice of the Eaſt-India-Company. During the difficulties and delays, which attended this negotiation, he was prevailed on by a friend to accompany him in a Northern tour, to ſpend a few weeks in the ſporting ſeaſon, at the houſe of Mr. L. Henrietta's father, with whom his friend had in early youth been in habits of particular intimacy. It was during this viſit, that the heart of the young Henrietta became tenderly attached to this amiable

amiable and accompliſhed ſtranger. While Mr. L. and his friend were engaged in the chace, or in convivial meetings with the neighbouring gentlemen, Henrietta and Edwin rambled over the hills, and the valleys; viſited the lakes, and the fells, the foreſts, and the caverns, with which this wild and romantic part of the country abounds. Their taſte, and their feelings were ever in uniſon: ſolitude is the nurſe of tender ſentiments. While Henrietta employed herſelf with her needle, Edwin read to her; when ſhe ſung to her harpſichord, he would hang over her with breathleſs attention: he choſe the flowers, which ſhe imitated in crayons. He offered to inſtruct her in the French language, and ſhe no longer thought the application, which it required, diſguſting. Week after week paſſed on, without their perceiving the flight of time; when they were rouſed from this delirium, by the preparation of Edwin's friend for their departure to London.

In the abſence of Edwin, Henrietta no longer found amuſement from her walks, her

her pencil, or her books; the face of nature in her apprehenſion was overſpread with a ſickly gloom; her vivacity was clouded, and her temper became yet more unequal. She ſaw the approach of winter with a melancholy before unfelt; ſhe avoided the ſociety of the young people of the village; and delighted to trace alone the untrodden ſnows, to liſten to the howling of the Northern blaſt, and to treaſure in her memory every paſt ſcene and converſation that had flattered her affection, or tended to cheriſh her hopes.

Edwin, who was to ſail from England in the enſuing ſpring, determined to make one more Northern journey, to take a laſt leave of his beloved Henrietta. In the tender moment of parting, they forgot the dictates of duty and diſcretion, and Henrietta conſented, after being privately united to her lover, to embark with him, and follow his fortunes to the Indies. The delicacy of her education, and conſtitution, made her experience many inconveniencies during the long voyage; but her enthuſiaſtic tender-

neſs

neſs enabled her to ſupport them. On their arrival at Madras, Edwin ſickened with a fever, common to Europeans from the fervor of a tropical climate, and in a few days expired in the arms of his wife.—Over the ſenſations of the unfortunate Henrietta permit me to draw a veil; to ſenſible hearts, ſuch deſcriptions are unneceſſary, to the cold and diſſipated, they would be inconceivable. By the pale light of the moon—alone—in agonizing ſorrow,—on the cold earth, that covered the remains of her huſband,—ſhe would frequently kneel,—loſt to the world,—to hope,—almoſt to reaſon. Her misfortunes, and her ſenſibility procured her the humane attentions of the factory; and a widow lady who was about to return to England, prevailed on Henrietta to accompany her. During their paſſage home, ſhe attended her with the moſt affectionate aſſiduity, and on their arrival, accompanied her to the houſe of Mr. L. her father, who, affected by the fading languor, and deep dejection, which appeared in the countenance of the ill-fated Henrietta, received her with tenderneſs, without recrimination;

and

and endeavoured by every method in his power, to diſſipate her apprehenſions, and alleviate her diſtreſs. Tears of gratitude and duty ſtreamed from her eyes, and overcome by the ſtruggle of contending paſſions, ſhe felt an intenſe pain dart through her temples, attended with cold ſhiverings, ſucceeded by a delirium and burning fever. For three weeks her life was deſpaired of, on the fourth ſhe began to revive; but her nerves ſeemed to be ſhattered, her recovery was ſlow, and ſhe ſunk into laſſitude and melancholy. Her father concerted various plans for her amuſement, but in vain; ſhe beſought him to leave a wretch unworthy of his tenderneſs, to ſuffer the conſequences of her indiſcretions, and wear out the remainder of her life in ſorrow and regret.

For ſix years ſhe indulged in a luxury of tender melancholy, at length the perpetual recurrence of the ſame ideas, brought on a ſpecies of mental alienation, attended with hypochondriac ſymptoms that alarmed her. When ſhe attempted to take up a book, her ſenſes ſeemed confuſed, and ſhe read without

out comprehending; ſhe felt a perpetual terror on her ſpirits, for which ſhe could aſſign no cauſe; ſhe ſtarted at every ſound, and ſhuddered at her own imaginations. She now began to feel that ſhe had been dignifying with the name of virtue, a criminal weakneſs,—that

" All gracious Providence is good and wiſe,
" Alike in what it gives, and what denies:"—

that this world is a ſtate of diſcipline, in which we are placed for duty, for uſefulneſs, and for action; and that in wilfully injuring our own health, and conſuming our faculties, we are guilty of the moſt unpardonable, becauſe the moſt deliberate ſuicide. She determined to collect the little remaining ſtrength ſhe poſſeſſed, and force herſelf into a ſituation where ſhe would be obliged to exert herſelf, and endeavour to ſhake off the torpor, which ſeemed ſtealing upon every faculty. She recollected having received repeated invitations to London, from the lady who had accompanied her from India, and reſolved to avail herſelf of them; and with the approbation of her father, make a viſit to the metropolis.

Mrs.

Mrs. F. received her with cordiality and pleaſure; poſſeſſing an excellent underſtanding, and as excellent a heart, ſhe devoted herſelf to amuſe and cheer her melancholy gueſt; varied her converſation a thouſand ways, to engage, to ſooth, to entertain her. The affectionate heart of Henrietta glowed with emotions of the moſt lively, and grateful eſteem. Mrs. F. introduced her into a reſpectable circle of intelligent and literary friends: at once delighted, and humbled by their converſation, Henrietta found her ardor for improvement and knowledge revive; ſhe regretted that ſhe had hitherto been the wayward child of feeling,—that ſhe had ſuffered ſo much time to elapſe unimproved. She tried to collect her thoughts, and fortify her mind; the firſt ſtep to which, ſhe properly judged would be by exerciſe, regularity, and attention to re-eſtabliſh her health, and ſtrengthen her nerves. She now awoke as from a troubleſome dream: the dark cloud which had ſo long reſted on her proſpects, opened its ſilver lining, and appeared to be diſperſing. She directed all the energy of her

nature into the purſuit of moral and religious truth: tranquillity and cheerfulneſs returned, as her mind gradually expanded, and ſhe repeated with enthuſiaſm,—

" How charming is divine philoſophy;
" Not harſh and crabbed, as dull fools ſuppoſe;
" But muſical, as is Apollo's lyre."

Though ſtill at times,—" The form of beauty " dimly ſeen," would hover over her imagination,—when ſhe wept, and remembered the gay illuſions of youth,—yet, reſignation mingled in the tide of ſorrow; while the impreſſions, as rendered fainter by diſtance, became at length the remembrance of remembrances; and if they betrayed her into ſome little whimſicality of character, the deviations were ſuch, as to the humane and philoſophic eye, tracing back effects to cauſes, rendered her more dear and intereſting.

By the preceding little hiſtory, my friend, I wiſh to allay your anxiety reſpecting your Elizabeth's taſte for works of fancy; ſhe will not, like Henrietta, be left without a guide

guide to her wayward deſtiny; the ſenſibility of her nature will render her as wax in your hands, and you may with proper attention, impreſs the ſtamp of every virtue on her young and ductile mind. For though "the exertion of our own faculties may "be the bleſſed fruit of diſappointed hope," a good parent would wiſh to guard the children of her affection from thoſe rude ſhocks, which however ſalutary, are never unattended with danger. Yet, I have ſometimes doubted, whether the acute ſenſibility ariſing from an organization peculiarly delicate, may not bring the happineſs of the poſſeſſor, upon an average, to nearly the ſame medium with that of others, whoſe nerves being of a leſs flexible texture, feel no vibration from the thouſand tremulous touches that convulſe the tender and impaſſioned heart. So that, perhaps, taking in the whole circle of intellectual pains and pleaſures, our ſatisfactions may be leſs unequally diſtributed than they appear to be;—"for "when the mind's free, the body's deli-"cate." But however this may be, thoſe who have the care of young people, ſhould

be particularly watchful over thoſe, whoſe diſpoſitions are of this ardent caſt, and endeavour to lead them gently (for conſtraint will only increaſe the danger) to more juſt and ſober concluſions: not by exaggerated and diſguſting repreſentations of the crimes, and the follies of mankind, leſt the generous glow of uncorrupted youth ſhould be chilled by unneceſſary and ſordid habits of ſuſpicion, and "like the roſe-bud unblown, "preſent nothing to the beholder, but thorns "and prickles." But they ſhould be brought into ſociety, and (while their taſte and judgment are directed, and aſſiſted by a ſenſible friend) be taught in ſome meaſure to read men, as well as books.

I am, &c.

No. IX.

To Amasia.

HOWEVER unqualified I may be for the taſk you have aſſigned me, I ſhall yet have too much pleaſure in the attempt, entirely

entirely to excuſe myſelf from undertaking it. I am not ſurpriſed at the pleaſure you aſſure me you received from your viſit to Hortenſius and his lady, and in compliance with your requeſt, will venture a rude outline of portraits, which deſerve the pencil of a better artiſt.

A phyſiognomiſt would at the firſt view, receive a favourable impreſſion from the fine figure, and ingenuous countenance of Hortenſius; and firſt impreſſions, when forcible, I believe generally come pretty near the truth. With great mental powers, Hortenſius has received every advantage that a liberal education can beſtow; to which he has added by viſiting different countries that expanſion of mind, which without weakening the ſocial and patriotic affections, has truly rendered him a citizen of the world—

" The love of human kind,
" The large ambitious wiſh to make them bleſt."

He has in his progreſs through life ſeen frequent occaſion to change his opinions on

the moſt important ſubjects; and has ever intrepidly followed truth, wherever it might lead him, without ſuffering his integrity to be warped by the claims of intereſt, or the allurements of ambition. In this ſteady adherence to principle he has made expenſive ſacrifices; but ſo graceful has been his reſignation of external, and adventitious advantages, that while his friends with concern, and his enemies with malignant pleaſure, have obſerved him decline the path of public honours, for which his virtues and abilities eminently qualified him, he alone is unconſcious of having done any thing extraordinary, from being accuſtomed to habits of greatneſs and goodneſs. His general manners have a happy mixture of elegance and ſimplicity; his converſation (though unſtudied) is elevated and improving, and reflects like a poliſhed mirror, a virtuous and unſpotted mind. His diſpoſition is frank and open; for what has he to dread from the inſpection of men, who in all his conduct, his purſuits and his pleaſures, believes himſelf in the preſence of a pure and omniſcient Being?

He

He is a firm believer in revelation from a rational conviction (after an impartial examination) of its truth, but with genuine liberality of mind (a phraſe much uſed, but little underſtood) never conſigns over thoſe who differ from him, either to folly, or to reprobation. On this ſubject he often quotes a maxim from Shenſtone, "How is "a man ſaid to be guilty of incredulity? "Are there not ſizes of underſtandings, "adapted to the different ſorts, and as it "were ſizes of narrations?" He is fond of retirement, becauſe he has reſources in himſelf which prevent it from ever becoming tedious; yet he is incited both by ſocial affections, and ſocial duties, frequently to mix in ſociety, when the company inſenſibly find that the converſation takes a more correct, a more ſolid, a more uſeful, and not leſs cheerful turn, without diſcovering that they owe it to the ſuperior talents, and addreſs of Hortenſius. He poſſeſſes the happy art of reproving the inexperienced, and miſinformed, without wounding their ſelf-love; and of awing the boiſterous, and licentious, into a temporary decency by the real dignity of unaffected virtue, that can be—

" Sometimes angry, while its frown confounds,
" Nay, ev'n vindictive, but in vengeance juſt."

In his domeſtic relations, Hortenſius is an affectionate huſband, a tender parent, a generous maſter, a firm and faithful friend. Superior to all vulgar prejudices, he has given equal attention to the mental improvement of his daughters as of his ſons, and has taught them to found their virtues on the ſtable baſis of principle, not on the fluctuating idle vapour of opinion. He juſtly conſiders as ridiculous, the abſurd notion, that nature has given judgment to man, and to women imagination: nothing can be more diſtinct, than the mere flutter of thoughtleſs vivacity, which often beſpeaks a frivolous mind, eaſily amuſed and diſſipated, becauſe incapable of fixed attention,—and that exquiſite ſenſibility of natural and moral beauty, which improved and chaſtened by high cultivation, ſelects, combines, arranges,—

" Darts with reſiſtleſs ardor, to embrace
" Majeſtic forms."

and leads to uncreated excellence and beauty. Judgment and imagination are equally,

equally, when poſſeſſed in an exalted degree, the reſult of ſtrong mental energy. If in trifles women diſplay more taſte and fancy than men, it is becauſe their attention has been chained down to trifles. Sexual diſtinctions in intellect and virtue, have depraved and weakened the human ſpecies.

Hortenſius, by exemplifying in his own conduct, the virtues he recommends to his children, diſplays at once their excellence and practicability; and engages their confidence, their reverence, and their love. In all inferior concerns he is regular and punctual, and by his punctuality enhances every obligation he confers. You will perhaps accuſe me of giving no ſhades to my picture, and retort upon me an aphoriſm I have frequently repeated from Lavater,—"A God, a plant, an animal, are not com-" panions for man, nor are the faultleſs." Hortenſius has undoubtedly the frailties which belong to human nature, but it is not pleaſing to loſe a great character in its defects. If his acute ſenſibility has ſubjected him to little inequalities of temper,

and

and his refined taſte rendered him in ſome degree faſtidious; if his benevolence has ſometimes exceeded the bounds of prudence, and his warm affections hurried him into what might be termed an undue zeal; theſe failings growing on the ſtem of virtue, have by rendering him more watchful, more humble, more candid to the errors of others, enriched the ſoil which gave them birth.

From an entire regard for her huſband, Hortenſia has aſſimilated herſelf to him, has caught, concentrated, and reflected his good qualities; in her ſociety he enjoys "the "calm ſatisfaction which refreſhes the "parched heart like the ſilent dews of "heaven, of being beloved by one who can "underſtand him." His ſtudies, his purſuits, and his amuſements, ſhe partakes, heightens, and improves. There is no diſguſting contention between them for ſuperiority; on occaſions of importance both yield to reaſon: trifles they do not think worth conteſting, and over the errors of humanity, affection ſpreads a graceful veil. Their behaviour to each other is at an equal

diſtance

diſtance from the ſtudied formality of decayed love, and the rude blunt familiarity, which is the grave of reſpect and friendſhip. They never diſconcert their friends by indelicate conteſts, and acrimonious retorts, from a conviction that in an union ſo intimate, expoſing the weakneſs of each other muſt bring contempt upon both. They contrive to be independent with a narrow income, by contracting their wants; and cheerfulneſs, neatneſs, taſte, and hoſpitality, amply compenſate for the abſence of ſplendour, pomp, and luxury.

In the moral and intellectual improvement of their offspring, they unite their cares; while mutual confidence, and good ſenſe prevent them from counteracting each other: from their plan of education artificial refinement is excluded; and they never loſe ſight of the idea, that their children are a valuable depoſit, committed to their hands, to be trained up for the benefit of ſociety, and for the glories of immortality.

I am, &c.

No. X.

No. X.

CLEORA, OR THE MISERY ATTENDING UNSUITABLE CONNECTIONS.

AMONG the various ſources of infelicity in human life, no cauſe has been more productive of complicated wretchedneſs, than the union of perſons whoſe minds and diſpoſitions are diſſimilar: "ſympathy is the charm of life:"—and no exterior circumſtance, or adventitious advantage can procure happineſs, where domeſtic harmony is wanting.

Frances and Cleora experienced the miſfortune of loſing a very excellent father during their early childhood. Mrs. L. their mother, an amiable and accompliſhed woman, when the firſt tranſports of grief had ſubſided into calm reſignation, though ſtill young, and peculiarly qualified to appear with advantage in public life, retired on the ſmall fortune left her by her huſband; and in a village many miles from London, devoted her time and faculties to the

the education of her beloved daughters. The improvement of the young ladies, both in perſon, and mind, was anſwerable to a mother's fondeſt wiſhes:—health glowed in their cheeks, and vivacity ſparkled in their eyes, while natural good ſenſe, directed by virtuous principle, added dignity to the graces which youth and innocence beſtow.

At twenty years of age, Frances became acquainted with Hilario, the ſon of a neighbouring farmer. This young man was poſſeſſed of a noble and ingenuous mind, heightened by a good, though not a learned education, ſituated far from the temptations which great cities preſent, his heart was uncorrupted by vice, and his notions unſophiſticated by prejudice, or faſhion:—the hours that could be ſpared from agriculture, he devoted to books; and bleſſed with health, virtue, and competence, he wanted only a female friend to participate, and complete his happineſs. In Frances L. he found this friend:—the ſympathy was mutual:—for congeniality of taſte and ſentiment ſoon produced, on both ſides, a ſincere and animated

mated attachment:—no obſtacle intervened to obſtruct their union. Frances had no fortune:—but Hilario, whoſe ſoul diſdained all ſordid, and mercenary conſiderations, and whoſe choice was dictated by nobler views, eſteemed her a fortune of herſelf: her heart was to him a more valuable treaſure than millions of gold. Time, inſtead of weakening, gave ſtrength to their reciprocal affection, for their love was founded on the firm baſis of reaſon and virtue; and a family of fine children cemented their eſteem by ſtill dearer ties.

Cleora, who was ſome years younger than her ſiſter, contemplated their felicity with the moſt heart-felt ſatisfaction.—But while her fancy ſtrayed to future periods, in which ſhe hoped to realize the ſame domeſtic ſcenes of happineſs, the tear of ſenſibility would gliſten in her eye, while fearful doubt, and ſoft anxiety, agitated her youthful boſom, and obſcured for a moment, the ſun-ſhine of hilarity, with which her countenance was generally illumined.—Thus time rolled on, and Cleora attained her five

and

and twentieth year, but met not with another Hilario. About this period a gentleman from London came on a viſit to the houſe of her brother-in-law. Mercutio, for ſo I ſhall call him, had acquired a conſiderable fortune on the ſtock-exchange;—his general character was fair;—for he had ever punctually fulfilled his engagements in the alley, and had neither decreaſed his wealth, nor impaired his conſtitution, by any of thoſe vices, and follies, by which ſo many young men, conſume, and ſhorten their days. But riches had not liberalized the heart, that early aſſociations had rendered narrow; and beyond himſelf, he never knew a generous care.—His perſon was tall, and thin, he might be reckoned handſome, at leaſt he thought ſo, and when adjuſting his cravat to the niceſt minutia of faſhion, would frequently contemplate his own figure with no ſmall degree of ſelf-complacency.

The rural ſcenery, the effect of which was heightened by novelty,—the innocent cheerfulneſs of Hilario's family,—and above all, the animated features, unaffected manners,

ners, and modeſt dignity of Cleora, (ſo unlike the town ladies, whom he had had the honour of gallanting to a play, or dancing with at a city ball) awakened in his ſoul all the little energy, and native ſenſibility, that for many years had lain dormant, or had been abſorbed in the grand purſuit of acquiring money: theſe new and tender ſenſations, made him for a while forget even his compting-houſe, and venture to truſt his buſineſs to the management of his clerks; theſe days of vacation, he devoted to the fair nymph, whom from the firſt hour in which he beheld her, he determined to make his wife.

Cleora, though poſſeſſed of an excellent underſtanding, and enthuſiaſtic love of virtue,—was not devoid of vanity. Mercutio's obſequious attentions gratified this foible. It is true, her firſt impreſſions were not of the moſt favourable caſt; but when ſhe heard the public teſtimony of his good character, and in converſation found him aſſent to every obſervation that ſhe made, and echo back the ſentiments which ſhe uttered, ſhe willingly

willingly retracted her too haſty judgment. Accuſtomed to obſervation, and priding herſelf on her penetration, ſhe determined to ſcrutinize his diſpoſition attentively. But, alas! the man was diſguiſed in the lover, and ſelf-love threw a veil before *her ſight*; her own temper frank, and unguarded, the friends with whom ſhe had been accuſtomed to converſe, the ſame, ſhe could form no proper eſtimate of the artificial manners, acquired by an intercourſe with the world. —That the man had taſte ſhe was convinced: he had ſhown it, by diſtinguiſhing *her*;—and in offering to marry her without a fortune, he proved the diſintereſtedneſs, and ſincerity of his attachment.

In ſhort, after a few journeys, and a few letters, the ſtyle of which (though much ſtudied) did not entirely meet with her approbation, Cleora became the wife of Mercutio. Various were the ſenſations, that agitated her mind, as ſhe bade farewell to the beloved ſhades of F. and the ſtill dearer friends, and companions of her youth. But when her mother beſtowed the maternal

bleſſing, and parting embrace, her emotions were too violent to be reſtrained. Mercutio, the fond bridegroom, though unuſed to the melting mood, could not behold the tender ſcene unmoved, and when in the poſt-chaiſe, endeavoured with unremitting attention, to ſoothe her grief, and reſtore her cheerfulneſs. Cleora, whoſe feelings were regulated by principle, and whoſe heart was ever awake to kindneſs and gratitude, ſmiled upon her huſband, and in accents ſoftened by ſenſibility, aſſured him of her affection. But, though ſhe endeavoured to conceal, ſhe could not entirely diſſipate the gloom, that hung over her mind, and which their entrance into London, on a ſultry evening in the month of Auguſt, by no means tended to remove.

Cleora, though a child of nature, accommodated herſelf to her new ſituation: ſhe had no reliſh for the pleaſures of the town: but ſhe loved ſociety, the want of which (when in the country) ſhe had often regretted, and which ſhe now flattered herſelf ſhe ſhould be able to enjoy. She employed herſelf

herſelf alſo in the regulation of her houſe-hold, and her leiſure hours, as had ever been her cuſtom, ſhe intended to devote to read-ing. Romantic in her ideas of conjugal felicity, in her huſband ſhe expected to find a faithful, and affectionate friend: but, alas! theſe fond expectations were ſucceeded by cruel, and mortifying diſappointment, and her ſchemes of rational happineſs, "melted "into thin air."

Mercutio unfortunately had no ideas of a wife, beyond a miſtreſs, and a houſe-keeper; and even as ſuch his notions were ſordid, and degrading. The ſuperior talents, and cultivated underſtanding of his lady, created in his mind a narrow jealouſy, while the elevation of her ſentiments, and the fervent piety of her heart, he now treated with deri-ſion, or looked on with contempt: and though ſhe ſtudiouſly endeavoured to con-ceal the diſguſt, which this behaviour ex-cited, and tried to regulate her conduct by motives of duty and virtue, he yet felt that ſhe did not love him. For he was con-ſcious that he did not deſerve her affection,

and this conſciouſneſs joined to ſome diſappointments in conſiderable ſpeculations, gave additional acrimony to a temper, which before was far from placid. He knew, that Cleora took pleaſure in the converſation of ſenſible, and liberal minded people. With ſuch therefore he was determined to break off all acquaintance, and keep no company, but what his buſineſs abſolutely required. In her domeſtic concerns, though conducted with prudence, and œconomy, he was ever interfering: never ſatisfied, and always ſuſpecting himſelf to be defrauded, he was continually obliging her to change her ſervants, and was conſtantly ringing in her ears little groveling maxims, that her ſoul abhorred, and roſe ſuperior to. Nor would he even permit her to enjoy her literary purſuits unmoleſted, but ſeized every opportunity of uttering ſarcaſms againſt reading ladies, and inſinuating that his intereſt was neglected, while ſhe ſat waſting her hours in the library.

Dejected,

Dejected, mortified, and wretched, ſhe propoſed viſiting the loved retreat, in which ſhe had paſſed her youthful days of happineſs, and innocence, and wiſhed to ſpend a part of the enſuing ſummer with her mother, and ſiſter. To this Mercutio at firſt reluctantly conſented, but afterwards peremptorily refuſed his conſent, urging, that he had no idea of his wife's ſpending money, and taking her pleaſure, while he was confined in London, and fatiguing himſelf to maintain her in luxury, and idleneſs.

Perhaps the truth was, he had not forgotten the tears ſhe ſhed at bidding them adieu; and though he was convinced that her affections were not his, he could not bear the thought, that ſhe ſhould love any one better. For, notwithſtanding the various methods which he made uſe of, to render her life miſerable, he was ſtill at times, what is commonly termed fond of her. To invite her friends to London, was a propoſition, which ſhe dared not make. He already thought too high of the favour he

had conferred, in marrying her without a fortune. She wiſhed not therefore to increaſe the ſtock of obligation. Beſide a mingled ſenſation of pride and duty, made her willing to conceal the horrors of her ſituation from thoſe friends who believed her happy, and rejoiced in her proſperity.

Cleora, in becoming a mother, found for a while ſome mitigation of her ſorrow: her affections had now an object, on which to reſt. To her nurſery, therefore, ſhe devoted her whole attention: and while ſhe ſaw Mercutio delighted with his ſon and heir careſs the ſmiling infant, ſhe felt emotions of pleaſure, to which her heart had been for a long time a ſtranger. Awakened from the fond dreams of youthful enthuſiaſm, and habituated to the capricious humour of her huſband, her underſtanding exerted its force. The little happineſs, which it might ſtill be in her power to obtain, ſhe determined to ſecure, and as the fairy viſion vaniſhed from her ſight, ſhe gradually accommodated herſelf to the ſituation, in which, however uncongenial, there was no alternative.

The

The bloom faded from her cheeks, and vivacity no longer ſparkled in her eye. But her countenance ſtill ſhone with intelligence; her features were often illumined by maternal tenderneſs, and the ſerene ſmile of conſcious virtue; her increaſing family enlarged her occupations, and engroſſed her cares, and all concern for herſelf was quickly abſorbed in the welfare of her beloved children: but new ſources of diſquiet ſoon aroſe, Cleora and Mercutio, whoſe ideas on almoſt every ſubject were entirely unlike, differed materially in their notions concerning education. Of courſe, in all their operations they were conſtantly counteracting each other. The faults, which Cleora thought deſerving of puniſhment, Mercutio would encourage, and the precepts that ſhe inculcated with the moſt earneſt ſerioufneſs, with him were frequently the ſubjects of deriſion. On the other hand, when out of humour, which was too often the caſe, he would vent his paſſion on the children, and for trifling miſdemeanors threaten chaſtiſements, which he never intended to inflict. The maſter, to whoſe

care Cleora wiſhed to intruſt the inſtruction of her boys, Mercutio capriciouſly objected to; though he could aſſign no rational cauſe for ſo doing, and placed them under a pedagogue of narrow abilities, and ſuperficial learning. The girls, whom ſhe intended educating herſelf, he inſiſted on being ſent to a cheap boarding-ſchool, many miles diſtant from the metropolis, kept by a relation of his own, of whoſe talents and œconomy he entertained a very high opinion.

Cleora, diſappointed in all her favourite plans, enervated by confinement, and long languiſhing in an unfriendly ſoil, had not ſufficient ſpirit to diſpute his authority; indeed her declining health in a meaſure incapacitated her for the taſk that lay neareſt her heart, the education of her daughters. She attended her children, therefore, to their reſpective ſeminaries, and, while ſhe gave them leſſons for their future conduct, endeavoured to conceal the deep melancholy, which in ſecret preyed upon her heart. On her return, the malady with which ſhe had been

been long ſtruggling became more violent; a nervous fever ſhook her whole frame; advice was called in, the air changed, and every art made uſe of, but all in vain; perpetual conflict had exhauſted the vital powers, and Cleora expired in the arms of her mother, recommending to her care the dear children, for whoſe ſake alone ſhe could have wiſhed to have lived a few years longer.

Let this ſimple narrative be a caution to women, reſpecting the connections they form for life. As ſociety is at preſent organized, the moſt ſenſible and beſt educated, if they have not fortunes, can ſcarcely form a plan for future advancement, nay, maintenance, unconnected with matrimony. This, joined to the various tender images which float in the youthful fancy, is the cauſe why we ſee many women, who deſerve a better fate, united to men unworthy of their affections, through a deſire of ſecuring an eſtabliſhment. The firſt man who pays them ſerious attentions, they are willing to believe poſſeſt of all the good qualities

ties and virtues, which they deem neceſſary in a companion for life. Miſled by the flattery of the lover, and deceived ſtill more by their own hearts, they find not their miſtake, till experience convinces them when too late, that neither riches, beauty, nor talents, can ſecure happineſs, when ſuitability is wanting, which alone can give permanency to friendſhip, and prove the ſource of domeſtic felicity and ſocial bliſs.

E. H.

No. XI.

JOSEPHA, OR THE PERNICIOUS EFFECTS OF EARLY INDULGENCE.

NEKAYAH, Princeſs of Abyſſinia, caſting her eyes upon the Nile that flowed before her, "Anſwer," ſaid ſhe, "great father of waters, thou that rolleſt "thy floods through eighty nations, to the "invocation of the daughter of thy native "king. Tell me, if thou watereſt through "all thy courſe a ſingle habitation from "which thou doſt not hear the murmurs of "complaint!"

Melancholy

Melancholy are the pictures which Dr. Johnſon draws of human life: But after making every allowance for the dark medium, through which his natural temper might lead him to view the world, we are obliged to confeſs, though oft-times with reluctance, that his obſervations are, generally, too much founded upon truth. In the houſe of mourning, the chamber of ſickneſs, within the gloomy walls of a priſon, or in the cheerleſs hut of poverty, we allow of ſorrow, and expect complaint; but the murmurs of diſcontent are not confined to theſe. The palaces of the great, the manſions of the rich, the abodes of the apparently healthy and proſperous, are too frequently inhabited by mortals bending beneath a load of real, or imaginary afflictions, and many a gilded coach contains an aching heart. What are the cauſes of this comparatively univerſal uneaſineſs, in a world where ſo much beauty is diſplayed, and ſo much bounty diſtributed? The benevolent Creator of men gave us exiſtence, that we might be happy; he rejoices in the felicity of his children, and we never more properly

perly enter into his "everlaſting plan," than when our hearts are expanding with gratitude, and exulting with virtuous and pleaſurable emotions. To anſwer the queſtion philoſophically, the limited capacities of human beings might be alledged, as the primary cauſe of all our woes. Ignorance produces error, and every deviation from truth and virtue, however ſmall, may be conſidered as a deviation from happineſs in a moral ſenſe. The diſcontent ſo prevalent, may be attributed alſo to factitious refinement, our ſlavery to faſhion, and wrong education. The wants of nature are few, but we are for ever increaſing our deſires, and diſturbing our repoſe in ſearch of ideal good, and artificial luxury. By falſe delicacy we enervate our minds, relax our nerves, and render our ſenſibility ſo unpleaſingly acute, that the lighting of a graſs-hopper becomes a burden, and the moſt trivial diſappointment a ſerious calamity. In conforming to faſhion, we frequently are obliged to ſacrifice our own inclinations, and ſubmit to a bondage more arbitrary and intolerable, than the heavieſt chains. By wrong education

cation theſe evils are perpetuated, which may therefore be mentioned both as a cauſe and an effect. The wrong education of youth produces weakneſs and impropriety of character in more advanced life; and this effect is again the cauſe of improper tuition to poſterity.

Mr. B. a man of amiable diſpoſition and unblemiſhed moral character, but poſſeſſed of a weak and uncultivated mind, loſt his wife, a very valuable woman, at an early period of life, who left behind her an infant daughter. Deprived of his beloved companion, and not chooſing to enter into other connections, he devoted his whole attention to this child; to enrich her, he purſued his trade with indefatigable induſtry, and no moments appeared to him ſo ſweet, as thoſe, in which he careſſed his little darling; he thought no expence too great, which might contribute to adorn her perſon, and improve her mind. Conſcious of the defects of his own education, he prized learning in others, and endeavoured to procure the beſt maſters the town afforded,

to inſtruct his young Joſepha in the various branches of polite knowledge ſuppoſed to be neceſſary for ladies in genteel life. Some of his friends adviſed him to ſend her to boarding-ſchool; but Joſepha wept, and remonſtrated; he immediately therefore gave up the plan, and, in the ſtead, invited to his houſe a young lady in the joint capacity of governeſs and companion.

Joſepha was agreeable in her exterior, and engaging in her manners. Nature had alſo endowed her with warm affections, and ſome ſhare of good ſenſe; but indulgence rendered her impatient of diſappointment, and the delicacy and tenderneſs with which ſhe was brought up, increaſed her natural ſenſibility to a degree bordering on weakneſs. It was her father's wiſh, to ſee and make her happy; his intentions were good, but he miſtook the way. His fondneſs led him to anticipate her deſires: he watched her very looks; and the leaſt cloud on her brow overwhelmed him with anxiety. The young lady her companion, accuſtomed to dependance, and naturally bleſſed with a mild

and

and gentle diſpoſition, inſtead of counteracting, increaſed the evil, by uniformly giving way to all her little whims and caprices. Being thus never contradicted, and gratified in all her wiſhes as ſoon as formed, Joſepha grew reſtleſs and languid, for want of ſufficient motives to awaken her energy and exert her faculties: ſhe was both too timid and too delicate to be fond of public amuſements, and the indulgence ſhe met with at home, rendered her too faſtidious to cultivate much acquaintance. What then was to be done? She painted, ſhe drew, amuſed herſelf with muſick, read novels and poetry, and repeatedly changed the fancy of her clothes; but all proved inſufficient to employ her time, and occupy her thoughts: ſhe felt herſelf diſcontented and unhappy, though ſhe knew not why. Thus paſſed the firſt nineteen years of her life, when ſhe was one day arouſed from the torpor of vacuity, by Mr. B—s informing her, that he expected a large party of gentlemen to dinner. They came, and among them was a young man of the name of Clermont: he appeared to be about twenty-eight; he was

not

not handſome, but his perſon was graceful and his converſation intelligent; while equally devoid of fulſome flattery and coxcomical ſelf-ſufficiency, his eaſy ingenuous manners gave the promiſe of an amiable and benevolent heart.

When dinner was ended, and the deſert gave place to the wine, Joſepha and Miſs —— retired to the drawing-room. Clermont allured by the ſound of the harpſichord, and preferring the company of the ladies to the noiſy toaſt, and bacchanalian ſong, ſoon followed them. Joſepha played and ſung with more than uſual pathos, and when at the tea-table, entered into converſation on the topic of the day, the laſt new publication, &c. &c. in a manner uncommonly animated, though ſomewhat embarraſſed: the company were no ſooner gone, than Joſepha aſked a thouſand queſtions concerning the gentleman, whom ſhe had taken ſo much pains to entertain; and learned that he was a young man of good character, genteel family, but ſmall fortune; and her father added, that he believed

lieved he loved books better than buſineſs. She expreſſed her approbation of his polite and elegant converſation, and intimated a wiſh that he might be again invited to the houſe: this wiſh the old gentleman took the earlieſt opportunity of complying with, in conſequence of which an intimacy enſued. Clermont was now a conſtant viſitor: he lent her books, and brought her muſic; liſtened with pleaſure while ſhe ſung, and admired the landſcapes that ſhe drew; but "he never talked of love," nor was there any peculiarity in his manner, by which ſhe could judge of the ſtate of his heart. Joſepha's partiality increaſed, and every repeated interview ſerved but to cement her attachment, and involve her in greater anxiety. Haraſſed by ſuſpenſe, and tortured by the poſſibility of mortification and diſappointment, ſhe indulged the moſt cruel inquietude: ſleep forſook her pillow; and her complexion, in which the lily was before rather too predominant, acquired a ſtill paler hue.

Mr. B. fondeſt of parents, ſaw her droop, and ſuſpected the cauſe; when one morning ſurpriſing her in tears, he beſought her with the moſt ſoothing tenderneſs, to make known to him the occaſion of her ſorrow. Unable to reſiſt his paternal endearments, ſhe hid her face in his boſom; and confeſſed without reſerve the ſoft cauſe of her preſent infelicity. He affectionately embraced her, ſmiled at her embarraſſment, and bade her dry her tears: Mr. C. he ſaid, could not remain inſenſible to her attractions, (for, who could behold his beloved Joſepha with indifference?) the attachment, he had no doubt, was reciprocal, and it was inferiority of fortune that kept him ſilent: but, what was fortune, when put in competition with her happineſs? He had gold enough for them both, and if ſhe would give him leave, he would that day make Clermont acquainted with his good fortune. Complicated were the emotions, which at that moment changed the faint tints of Joſepha's cheek, to the livelieſt crimſon; nor would ſhe ſuffer her father to depart, till he had promiſed to relinquiſh his ſcheme for the preſent, and take

take no future ſtep without her knowledge and approbation. Yet the conſolation, that he had adminiſtered, ſank deep into her heart. If Clermont really loved her, (which ſhe now perſuaded herſelf was the fact) how delicate, how diſintereſted his conduct; Gay hope once more gilded the fairy proſpect, and the fond illuſions were too enchanting to be ſoon reſigned; after indulging for a while theſe romantic reveries, ſhe formed the reſolution of making him acquainted with the favourable ſentiments, which he had inſpired; but, how was this to be done? Her father, it is true, had offered his interference; and, perhaps, he was the propereſt perſon to act in an affair ſo delicate: but ſhe was fearful of the manner, in which he would execute his commiſſion. Clermont poſſeſſed a mind refined and elevated, and ſhe ſhuddered at the idea of the blunt and mercantile ſtyle, that Mr. B. might probably addreſs him in, and her pride prevented her confiding in any other friend. After a thouſand projects, one moment embraced, and the next rejected, ſhe determined to write to him herſelf; and the very ſame evening re-

turned to him a pamphlet, within the leaves of which he found the following epiſtle.

"After much anxiety and mature deliberation, I ſit down to write what ſome perſons would term romantic, and others deem ridiculous and inconſiſtent with propriety. Mr. Clermont I am convinced is poſſeſſed of a mind, that riſes ſuperior to vulgar notions and debaſing prejudices; and under this conviction I venture to confeſs even to him, that his character, underſtanding, and the ſentiments which at various times I have heard him utter, (on many ſubjects ſo ſimilar, and congenial with my own) have made an impreſſion on my mind, more deep and intereſting, than I was myſelf at firſt aware of. This ſympathy is not the effect of youthful levity, or the wayward child of yeſterday. It is now many months ſince you was firſt introduced to my acquaintance, and time, inſtead of obliterating, has added ſtrength to a partiality, which a firſt interview began: I think I have no reaſon to be aſhamed of a ſenſibility founded on nature and awakened by reaſon. Why then ſhould

ſhould I bluſh at declaring ſentiments, the baſis of which is virtue? Yet at this moment a crimſon glow ſuffuſes my cheek,—whilſt an heſitating doubt ſuſpends for a while the motion of my pen, and bids me burn what I have written, and endeavour to ſubdue, or continue to conceal within my own boſom a preference which ought not to be given unaſked for. In return for this frank, and perhaps unguarded avowal of my ſentiments, I aſk an anſwer equally open and ingenuous. If your heart is already occupied by any prior attachment, tell me ſo: ſhould this not be the caſe, and yet you love me not, attempt not to deceive me. I am perſuaded you are above being actuated by intereſted conſiderations; and be aſſured I am too proud to wiſh to owe your attentions to any other motive than that of affection."

No ſooner was this important letter out of her own power, then her ſpirits failed, and her heart miſgave her; the moſt torturing agitation racked her boſom. One moment ſhe repented the raſh ſtep, and

would have given the whole world to have recalled the lines which ſhe had ſo precipitately written: the next ſhe endeavoured to calm her mind, by the recollection of what her father had ſaid in the morning. Thus paſſed the night. The next day ſhe was in ſome meaſure relieved from this cruel ſtate of anxiety, by receiving an anſwer full of gratitude, reſpect, and profeſſions of attachment. Clermont, though not abſolutely in love with Joſepha, was not engaged to any one elſe: her letter awakened his ſenſibility, and excited his aſtoniſhment; for notwithſtanding ſhe had ever received him with ſmiles, and diſtinguiſhed him by many marks of favour, his vanity had never flattered him with having made ſo ſtrong an impreſſion on her heart.

Joſepha, though ſecure of her lover, was ſtill far from being happy; fear and jealouſy continually haunted her ſickly imagination, and a word or look leſs animated, created a thouſand doubtful ſuſpicions. Clermont feeling himſelf both hurt and perplexed by her diſtruſt of his ſincerity, entreated, that

that an early day might unite them for ever. She conſented, and he ſoon after met her at the altar; where ſmiling, yet weeping, ſhe appeared like an April ſun, faintly beaming through a watery cloud. In becoming his wife, ſhe changed her ſituation, but not her diſpoſition. Of Clermont's behaviour ſhe had no juſt cauſe of complaint: for in him ſhe found the kind, the affectionate huſband, and the ſenſible and worthy friend; but Joſepha was too much ſpoiled by indulgence, and enervated by proſperity, to enjoy the bleſſings with which ſhe was ſurrounded: the moſt trivial occurrence, if it happened contrary to her wiſhes, was conſidered as a real misfortune; and, if ſhe was indiſpoſed, the whole houſe muſt be employed for her relief. Three years paſſing after their marriage without children, were the ſource of much diſquiet!—a ſon at the end of the fourth, removed this cauſe of diſcontent. But the care attending the delicate conſtitution and precarious life of an infant, involved her in new and perpetual anxiety. Their family was ſoon increaſed by the birth of another ſon: but

this was a terrible diſappointment; for ſhe had ſet her heart upon a daughter. The next child proved a girl, and all her wiſhes now ſeemed gratified; for Providence had never yet denied her any bleſſing: but, alas! the little Joſepha, whoſe opening beauties the mother beheld with fond delight, was ſeized with the ſmall-pox. The child after fourteen days of ſuffering, began to recover her health, but the charms of her face, and the delicacy of her complexion, were gone for ever: this was a cruel mortification; and all the good ſenſe and perſuaſive eloquence of Clermont proved ineffectual to reconcile his lady to this irremediable misfortune: from her weak and uſeleſs lamentation ſhe was rouſed by a ſtroke heavy and ſevere indeed. She had hitherto been groaning under the weight of imaginary evils; miſery too real now awaited her; the ſun-ſhine was paſt, though paſt without enjoyment, and the gathering ſtorm burſt with horror on her devoted head.

Clermont returning rather late one evening to their country retreat, was attacked by two highwaymen.

highwaymen. He ſurrendered his purſe; but one of the villains not content with the booty, and ſuſpecting himſelf to be known, fired a piſtol at his head; the ball pierced his temple:—he fell.——The hour paſſed over, in which he was accuſtomed to return; the children inquired for their father, and went to bed with reluctance.—Joſepha ſtood gazing with anxious ſolicitude at a window, which commanded the proſpect of the London road. Their houſe was ſituated at the foot of a bridge, through the arches of which the river M— fell with a murmuring noiſe. The wind whiſtled hollow among the bending willows that hung over the ſtream, and the pale moon beamed a ſhadowy light on the ſurrounding proſpect. She looked with wild uncertainty on every object, and miſtook the mingled ſounds for diſtant carriages; every moment increaſed her terror. At laſt the clock ſtruck twelve, when a poſt-chaiſe came rolling ſlowly along the dreary road; breathleſs with agitation, ſhe ran with an almoſt phrenſied impatience to the outward gate; when, what were her ſenſations at beholding!—but I forbear

to

to paint the ſoul-harrowing ſcene. Suffice it to ſay, that Joſepha was for a while deprived of reaſon; time reſtored her ſenſes, and bitter anguiſh was ſucceeded by dark and languid melancholy: undiſciplined by early adverſity, and unfortified by education,—ſhe ſtruggled not with her feelings, but remained in all the laſſitude of unavailing ſorrow. A prey to ungoverned ſenſibility and childiſh caprice, unſteady in her conduct, and peeviſh in her temper, ſhe neither gained the affections, nor ſecured the reſpect of her family and dependants. Her conſtitution originally delicate, grew ſtill more ſickly: ſhe ſeldom now quitted her chamber, and yet ſeldomer the houſe: her children whom ſhe had neither ſpirits to inſtruct, nor reſolution to controul, lived in a ſtate of continual diſcord. The ſons wild and impetuous, gave way to all the levity of youth, and entered with avidity into every ſpecies of extravagant diſſipation which the town afforded: her daughter, a girl of high ſpirit and violent paſſions, weary of the dull life ſhe paſſed at home, eloped at ſixteen with a young officer of profligate

profligate character, who allured by the report of a large fortune, contrived ſecretly to pay his addreſſes to her.—Such were the fatal effects of wrong, or neglected education.—May it be a leſſon to thoſe whoſe taſk it is

——— " To rear the tender thought,
" And teach the young idea how to ſhoot,
" To pour the freſh inſtruction o'er the mind,
" To breathe th' enlivening ſpirit, and to fix
" The generous purpoſe in the glowing breaſt."

Though we cannot by the utmoſt care and diligence beſtow talents, where nature has denied capacity, the mind may be always in ſome meaſure improved by cultivation; and the moral character depends much, if not altogether, on early aſſociations. It has been urged as an argument againſt the power of education, that many brought up under the ſame roof, with equal advantages both of precept and example, have proved very oppoſite characters on the ſtage of life. But, may not this objection be in a meaſure obviated, by replying, that as ſome individuals differ materially from others in point

point of capacity, natural temperament, &c. ſo they of courſe require a contrary treatment? and likewiſe by obſerving the negligence and inattention of parents in general with regard to the culture of the mind!—If a father provide for the fortune, and a mother takes care of the health, and exterior of their offspring, they are ſuppoſed to have done their duty; boarding-ſchool it is falſely imagined will ſupply the reſt: thus ſent into the world to take their chance, on adventitious circumſtances their future fate entirely depends.

For young women this tale and theſe obſervations are principally intended: many, my contemporaries, have been the times, and various the ways, in which you have been addreſſed: the grave divine, the ſober matron, and the anxious parent have alternately taken up the pen for your inſtruction. May I flatter myſelf that, for once, you will attend to the words of advice which come from your equal, your friend? I am young like yourſelves, and the ſentiments which I write, are neither dictated

dictated by ſpleen, nor rendered gloomy by misfortune. I mean not to ſatirize your foibles, I wiſh not to reſtrain your vivacity; it is not ill humour; it is not affected ſingularity: no! it is benevolence,—it is virtue, that ſtimulate me to take up my pen. I bluſh for the folly, the frivolity in which we have conſumed ſo many of our beſt days; too long have we been ſlaves to vanity and giddy flutterers of the hour: it is fit we ſhould now riſe ſuperior to this empty trifling. Poor is the praiſe, and ignoble the ambition which aſpires no higher than to be firſt in a new faſhion, or moſt admired in a circle of petit maitres (whoſe very flattery is ſatire). In this age of light and liberty, may our boſoms be fired with a more worthy emulation! and in the reformation of manners ſo much talked about, and ſo loudly called for, let us catch the glorious enthuſiaſm, and take the lead!—If we would but unite in intention, great would be our power, and extenſive our influence; the character of one ſex has ever been found to affect that of the other: for the confirmation of this we need not refer

to

to the days of chivalry, we need but obſerve on the preſent times. Aſk an impertinent coxcomb, Why he dreſſes, dances, and, in ſhort, loſes the man in the monkey? He will tell you, to pleaſe the ladies. And, are we pleaſed with this foolery? I leave the queſtion unreſolved; I dare not anſwer it: but this I will venture to affirm,—if there were no fine ladies, we ſhould not long be offended by fine ſpeeches, and fine gentlemen, both equally uſeleſs and inſipid.

With us alſo are intruſted the morals of the riſing generation: many of you, my young friends, may one day become mothers: think of the importance of the character: reflect likewiſe on the day of final retribution, which every paſſing moment haſtens on. Will it avail us in that ſolemn hour, that we have not been guilty of any intentional evil? Alas! I fear not. We ſhall ſurely be called to account both for *what we have done*, and what *we have left undone*, "and even ignorance when voluntary is "criminal."—Let us then while we are in poſſeſſion of health, of youth, of life, thoſe

precarious

precarious bleſſings which to-morrow may deprive us of, exert our faculties, and awake to virtue. "Be watchful, be diligent;" my country women! forego the empty gewgaw and ignoble praiſe, and aſpire after rationality here, and immortality hereafter; leave it to fops and beaux to determine who is the faireſt, and the beſt dreſt; let our ſubject of debate be who have moſt improved their underſtandings, beſt performed their active duties, and appeared with the greateſt advantage in the reſpective capacities of daughter, ſiſter, friend, &c. &c.

E. H.

No. XII.

To Amasia.

YOU appeared ſhocked, my friend, when in the courſe of converſation a few days ago, I profeſſed myſelf a convert to the doctrines of materialiſm and neceſſity; and liſtened to me with too much emotion, to attend to the force of my reaſoning.

reaſoning. Be not alarmed! I am not about to give you a tedious and formal diſſertation on theſe ſubjects, nor do I conceive myſelf adequate to ſuch an attempt; permit me only to ſtate a few arguments, which have made a deep impreſſion on my mind.

Like you, I ſtarted, when it was firſt propoſed to me, and with ſome degree of vanity, repeated with Sterne,—"I am poſi-"tive I have a ſoul, nor ſhall all the Ma-"terialiſts in the world convince me to the "contrary." Yet, on more mature conſideration, I knew not how to ſeparate my ideas of a ſpirit, from the organs upon which it acts. In infancy we perceive no traces of intellect: in ideotiſm it is deranged: in inſanity ſuſpended: in old age impaired: and in a ſecond childhood extinguiſhed. Where then is its independence? or how is it to exiſt abſtracted from the powers, by which it exerts itſelf? Do not ſuffer yourſelf to ſuppoſe that, like ſome ancient philoſophers, I believe motion to be eternally inherent in matter, or that the mind

mind is a combination of fiery particles met in fortuitous intercourſe. Cheered by the purer light of Chriſtianity, from whence has originated a ſounder philoſophy, we juſtly conſider as ridiculous, and puerile, ſuch erroneous fancies; and where we perceive a wiſe plan, and benevolent deſign, properly trace them back to wiſdom, goodneſs, and power. Very far then am I from affirming, that matter in itſelf is capable of conſciouſneſs and reaſoning; but only that rational faculties are the reſult of a nice organization of its parts, or of powers impreſſed on it by a ſuperior, and intelligent Artiſt.

Compare then your ideas with mine, and you will perhaps find that we have been differing all this time merely about *words*. My notions do not at all interfere with our hopes of a future exiſtence, which depend on the credibility of the New Teſtament, and not on ſuppoſitious theories of the immortality of the ſoul. What had once no exiſtence, may again ceaſe to be; and I believe you will not contend for the doctrine

of pre-exiſtent ſpirits; for as conſciouſneſs alone can conſtitute identity, if we have no remembrance of having lived in a ſtate prior to this, it can to us have no reality.

The Scriptures ſpeak decidedly of a future reſurrection and judgment, as in the fifteenth chapter of the firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians, where the ſubject is moſt fully and admirably diſcuſſed; but make no mention of an intermediate ſtate. Much ſtreſs has indeed been laid on our Saviour's promiſe to the dying thief, but a ſmall alteration in the punctuation makes a material difference in the ſenſe,—"For I ſay unto "thee, this day! thou ſhalt be with me in "paradiſe." The reply of Jeſus to the Saducees, has alſo been objected,—"God "is not the God of the dead, but of the "living, for all live unto him." "That is," (juſtly obſerves Dr. Prieſtly in his ſermon occaſioned by the death of Dr. Price,) "ſince though they are dead, they are to "live again; God who ſees into futurity, "regards them as if they were already "raiſed from the dead, and ſpeaks of them

"as

" as if they then ſtood in the ſame relation " to him, that they ever did, or ſhould do." And ſurely, it is not more difficult for the Supreme Being to renovate us again, and reſtore to the mind its conſciouſneſs, and to the body its form and vigour, than to preſerve the ſpirit from becoming extinct. This fancy of a naked, unembodied mind, appears to me uncomfortable and cheerleſs; or rather is it not a mere ſound, that cannot poſſibly convey any idea?

To your objection to the long inactivity of death, I can allow no weight; for the hour of ſleep, where there is no ſenſation between, is joined to that of reſtoration; and after all, I again repeat—our expectation of future rewards, and puniſhments, muſt be founded on the moral attributes of the Deity, which afford to natural religion a baſis or foundation for the expectation of future retribution; and on the evidences for the truth of the goſpel, and for the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt; which are not in the leaſt affected by the materiality, or immateriality of the ſoul. Nothing ſeems

to me a ſtronger proof of the mechaniſm of the human underſtanding, than the various degrees of capability of improvement which we obſerve in different minds. Materialiſts appear (at leaſt in the works I have read on the ſubject) not to have adverted ſufficiently to this, but lay too much ſtreſs on external and adventitious circumſtances; whereas, every obſervation which I have had an opportunity of making, confirms me in opinion, that we may ſay with more propriety of the intellect, than of the proud waves of the ſea,—" Hitherto thou ſhalt go, " and no further." Genius, notwithſtanding all local diſadvantages, will (as Democritus among the ſtupid Abderites) educate itſelf; nor can dulneſs be rouſed to excellence, by any methods which ingenuity can deviſe, or perſeverance put in practice. The ſame ſtudies, the ſame courſe of tuition, frequently ſend into the world the wit, and the blockhead: and in families, as well as academies, you are ſtruck with the varieties of character, ariſing out of capacities more or leſs limited, which no uniform tuition, or treatment could poſſibly aſſimilate. What

ſkill can draw out tones of equal melody, from inſtruments of a diſſimilar conſtruction? Hence impreſſions from phyſiognomy ſeem to me to have ſome weight; there is ſomething in external appearances, (without reference to what is commonly called beauty) to which every heart is ſenſible. The greater part of mankind have what is termed by the poet, "No character at all;" that is, no marked individuality of character: therefore the greater part of mankind have faces ſuch as Lavater places among his vulgar groupes, and are beheld without emotion; but where energy and ardent paſſion have delineated ſtrong expreſſion, in proportion as our own feelings are excited by ſympathy, we are, as vice or virtue prevails, affected with love or averſion*. Yes, I firmly believe this ſcience originates in truth, however imperfectly conceived, or liable to hazard and miſtake; nor do I recollect an inſtance, where my firſt impreſ-

* Perhaps I am here confuſing pathognomy, or the play of the paſſions, with phyſiognomy, or the original formation of the bones: yet ſurely, the former is in great meaſure an effect, of which the latter is the cauſe.

ſions were unfavourable, that however they may have been ſuſpended for a time, I have not at length returned to them again. It is well obſerved, that our firſt and third thoughts generally coincide.

I recollect on my hinting ſome of theſe ideas, you objected that as from a certain mechanical force, only certain effects can be produced, a confuſion of morals neceſſarily aroſe out of my ſyſtem. I allow there are ſome difficulties attending this ſyſtem, as well as every other: I only contend that the difficulties are leſs: but from the laws of aſſociation (to which this doctrine is by no means repugnant) moral principles may in great meaſure be formed, and natural propenſities corrected, and meliorated by early and repeated habits, and the abſence of temptation. You cannot give the children whom Providence has placed under your care a fine imagination, or ſtrong mental powers, becauſe theſe depend on a delicate and curious adjuſtment of their organs; but you may by exhortation and example, (we are all imitative beings,) by well proportioned

portioned rewards and chaſtiſements, by preſerving them from the contagion of vitious company, and inuring them to temperance, regularity and ſelf-denial, excite them to virtue, and reſtrain them from vice. When once reiterated aſſociations are thoroughly and deeply impreſſed on the brain, they are almoſt as difficult to be eradicated or changed, as the ſpots of the leopard, or the ſkin of the Ethiopian; and the notion of mechaniſm affords a ſurer baſis for the ſucceſs of our endeavours in what reſpects moral qualities than any other.

The objections alſo againſt the doctrine of neceſſity, which naturally ariſes out of materialiſm (though ſometimes entertained independent of it,) have not, in my opinion, any better foundation. Do you reproach me with aſcribing evil to God? I anſwer, that it is *ſeeming* evil, which will ultimately terminate in the greateſt poſſible good; and in return aſk, from what ſource do you deduce this partial diſorder? Is there any power capable of counteracting the benevo-

lent deſigns of the Deity? In the delicate ſituation in which you place yourſelf, be cautious how you proceed, leſt by robbing the Supreme Being of his attributes, by which alone we can form any idea of his nature, you incur the ſuſpicion of Atheiſm. Infinite power, and infinite preſcience imply all I mean to aſſert, and there is no getting rid of this argument, without admitting ſtill greater incongruities. This is exemplified in the diſcourſes on the character of Judas, by the learned and excellent Mr. Walker, of Nottingham. His candid mind would not permit him to evade the conſequences of his principles, and notwithſtanding your juſt admiration of this truly admirable writer, you confeſſed yourſelf diſpleaſed with the reſult.

But to return: I allow, we are not impelled from a blind fatality without us; for the ſources of our actions originate in the frame of our nature, and in the force of motives. But between two motives (ſay you) ſurely I have the power of ſuſpending an action? Yes, by a third motive occaſioning

caſioning that ſuſpenſion. Suppoſe then (you may perhaps reply) two motives equally powerful, may I not chooſe between them? Does this ever happen? Indeed I believe it is impoſſible: the very deciſion proves a determinate bias. Are we then (horrible thought!) to attribute the final deſtruction of the impenitent to God? Such a final deſtruction is no part of my creed; from the infinite goodneſs of the Parent of the univerſe, I expect the ultimate reſtoration of all his intelligent offspring, when purified and refined by ſufferings. "Our "light afflictions which are but for a mo- "ment, work for us a far more exceeding "and eternal weight of glory." And momentary will be all limited affliction, though extending thouſands of years beyond the duration of this earth, in compariſon of eternity.

Let us then preſs forward, convinced that as we advance in purity and virtue, we are proportionably nearer to happineſs; and carefully avoid vice and error, not only becauſe we feel with the poet, that virtue is ever accompanied with—

"Her

" Her chaſte, her fair attendant pleaſure ;"

but that we may have leſs of the backward paths of repentance to tread, and arrive ſooner at the deſired haven, whither all our wiſhes tend; where hope ſhall be loſt in viſion, and the ſublimer faculties, rectified and ſpiritualiſed, find their proper gratification.

I expect, my friend, from your excellent underſtanding, that though on revolving theſe curſory remarks, you ſhould not become a proſelyte to my opinions; you will not deem them entirely unworthy of your candid attention. Our horror of thoſe who differ from us, I believe, is often occaſioned by a want of information. Few adhere ſo obſtinately to their own tenets, as thoſe who have taken them upon truſt, without a proper examination. Let us have the courage to trace our ideas, as far as we have the ability through their whole train of conſequences; this can afford the only teſt of truth. Thus ſhall we bear with patience the oppoſition of others, remembering the juſt remark of the learned Eraſmus,

mus, "That his moſt virulent enemies were "among thoſe, who had the leaſt acquaint- "ance either with him, or his writings."

With ſincere eſteem I remain, &c.

No. XIII.

All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
All chance direction, which thou canſt not ſee;
All diſcord harmony, not underſtood;
All partial evil, univerſal good. POPE.

To Mr. ———

MAY I venture to tell you, that your theory of dreams appears to me by no means ſatisfactory; becauſe animals dream, do you imagine that they alſo have an ethereal and immortal ſpirit? Nor can I admit that fancy preſents us, while we ſleep, with any ſcenes really new. That our ideas are differently and whimſically combined, from the abſence of external objects, I readily

readily allow; but they are always the reſult of prior impreſſions made on the brain, however wildly they may be aſſociated; our conſciouſneſs is in a meaſure interrupted, by that reſt to our faculties, which nature has kindly ordained to refreſh and renovate us for action, and to relieve us from the dangerous preſſure of the ſame ideas. It is alſo certain that the ſounder and more undiſturbed our repoſe is, the leſs we dream. The firſt part of the night, (particularly if our ſpirits have been hurried in the day) and towards waking in the morning, fancy is moſt active and vivid; and agreeable, or terrifying viſions, depend entirely on the ſtate of health, the poſition of the body, or temper of mind, in which we laid down to ſleep. But if, on the contrary, the ſoul acted independently, while the body ſlumbered, its perceptions would be clearer; and its powers more acute and perfect than when waking, which I think you muſt allow is not the caſe.

How can you, who profeſs to be an immaterialiſt, when ſpeaking of the underſtanding,

ſtanding, talk of "extenſion and limits?"* Spirit ſurely can have neither extent nor boundary. That Almighty Being, who impreſſed on us theſe glorious rational powers, by no means prohibits us from exerciſing them in the higheſt poſſible degree, but on the contrary denounces a woe againſt thoſe who "wrap their talent in a "napkin."

"Spirits are not finely touch'd, but to fine
"Iſſues; nor nature ever lends the
"Smalleſt ſcruple of her excellence,
"But like a thrifty goddeſs ſhe demands
"Herſelf the glory of a creditor,
"Both thanks, and uſe."

You have purpoſely (you tell me) avoided conſulting any author, as you account it plagiariſm to adopt the opinions of others: pardon me, if I preſume again to differ! How ſlow would be the attain-

* "I conſider the human underſtanding capable of a "certain extenſion or degree, to which it is limited; "and therefore to attempt paſſing the barrier (which it "has pleaſed Almighty power to preſcribe to human "reaſon) is ſinful and preſumptuous, and muſt end in "our own confuſion, &c."

ments

ments of the moſt ingenious and acute unaſſiſted mind! Did we not avail ourſelves of (though not ſervily copy) the wiſdom and labour of paſt ages, arts and ſciences would be ever in their infancy, and we ſhould ſcarce ever riſe above ſavage life. Every thing is progreſſive: it is not in nature to produce perfection at once; and all that dignifies, adorns, and elevates life, has been the reſult of ſucceſſive improvements. Indeed, it is not poſſible to live among a refined and civilized people, without receiving ſome inſtruction, and poliſh from them.

You think the theory of materialiſm incapable of being demonſtrated; I am not convinced of this, but intend growing wiſer on the ſubject; and if it was, we ſhould, you ſay, be unprofitably employed in aſcertaining it, and with equal propriety might diſpute whether the inhabitants of Jupiter wore ſpectacles or not. "Ridicule is not "the teſt of truth." Can that employment be unprofitable (when it does not interfere with, or ſupercede any active duties,) which

tend

tends to the enlargement and improvement of the higheſt powers of our nature? Such a tendency has the ſearch after truth; and the mind like the body is ſtrengthened by exertion; beſides from this doctrine of a ſeparate ſpirit many miſtakes in morals have ariſen,—ſuch as the torturing of the body by various ſhocking auſterities, for the good of the ſoul. Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory abounds with ſtories of theſe cruel abſurdities. Hence flagellations, abſtinence, pilgrimages, cruſades, conventual and monaſtic inſtitutions; hence ſome have lived on the tops of high pillars, expoſed to all the inclemency of the weather, others were clothed with, and ſlept on iron, multitudes have been devoted to ſtrict ſilence, to inactivity and dirt; hence perſecutions. Hence the forſaking ſociety and ſocial virtue, in the hope by mortifying and lacerating the body to purify the ſoul, and recommend themſelves to that amiable Being, who like a kind parent has made our happineſs to conſiſt in our duties; who requires us only to be temperate that we may enjoy our health; moderate, that our ſatisfactions may be laſting; pure, that

we may eſcape the deſtructive conſequences of vice; to practiſe benevolence and kindneſs, that we may be reſpected and beloved; to do juſtice to others, that our own rights may be ſecured; and inſtead of paying idolatrous worſhip to canonized human ſpirits, to adore the beneficent Parent of the univerſe,—who

> " Dimly ſeen, in theſe his lower works;
> " Yet theſe declare his goodneſs beyond bounds,
> " And power divine."

There is one conſequence attending the doctrine of materialiſm, which you ſeem not to have been aware of, though it involves it in far greater difficulties than any you have mentioned: I allude to philoſophical neceſſity; for if the powers of the human mind are produced by mechaniſm (however delicate and curious the machine,) they muſt be ſubject to fixed and invariable laws. Let us trace our actions to their ſource; perception depends upon the circumſtances in which we are placed: for we cannot perceive what exiſts not within the ſphere of our obſervation; our judgment is

an

an effect of our perception, and will conſtantly be determined by the ſtrongeſt motive; that determination produces a volition, that volition action. It is in vain to alledge againſt this, that we frequently act in a manner, which (ſpeaking in popular dialect) we can neither approve nor juſtify; ſtill the action muſt be the reſult of the more powerful motive, whether it has for its end preſent enjoyment, or future good; nor is there any part of your former conduct, (however you may at preſent review it with diſapprobation) which you would not do over again, were it poſſible for you to be placed in the ſame circumſtances, and conſequently in the ſame diſpoſition of mind; but as the experience you have gained, alters thoſe circumſtances, this is impoſſible.

And all this is in harmony with the perfections of the Supreme Being; for what idea can you form of the Deity without preſcience? What is contingent cannot be a ſubject of foreknowledge: to foreſee and to ordain are the ſame things with

omniſcient power. It ſeems to me more worthy of Infinite Wiſdom, to order and provide for all poſſible events, by a ſeries of (what we term) mechanical cauſes and effects ſo conſtructed, as to be ultimately productive of the greateſt general and individual good, than by allowing philoſophical free-will to man,—which is indeed binding the Deity by a kind of neceſſity, and robbing him of one of his moſt diſtinguiſhed and eſſential attributes, to ſuppoſe there is an occaſion for a continual interpoſition of divine and ſupernatural power. As we ſhould have a higher opinion of the ſkill of an artiſt (I ſpeak with reverence) who conſtructed a machine at once equal to all the evolutions required of it, than if it ſtood in need of conſtant regulation and emendation. Nor do theſe ideas ſet aſide the duty of prayer; for as we ſee every thing effected by means, prayer is a mean appointed by God in revelation, and analogous to nature and reaſon, of bringing upon us bleſſings; and indeed ſuch devout affections by elevating the mind to the ſource of all excellence and goodneſs, generate

pure

pure and benevolent aſſociations, and enlarge and refine the underſtanding.

Whence then (you will ſay) the introduction of moral evil? I confeſs the ſubject has difficulties, yet ſurely not greater than the contrary hypotheſis; but theſe difficulties in all probability ariſe from our ſhort-ſightedneſs. We may judge from analogy, that there is an infinite variety in creation; it is true we are not angels! Yet if upon the whole of our exiſtence (of which perhaps the preſent life is but the infancy) happineſs predominates, we have reaſon to be thankful for the gift; and "verily God is good, is the language of "reaſon and of nature;" and beſides, had there been no diſorder, there could ſcarcely have been any virtue, the whole rational creation would have been aſleep; "relative "evil produces general good;" miſery calls forth benevolence, ſuffering fortitude, tyranny patriotiſm, neceſſity exertion, &c. Progreſſive purity and happineſs are moſt ſuitable to our frame and nature; nor is it inconſiſtent with the benevolence of a per-

fect Being, to train us up to ultimate felicity, by diſcipline and gradation; this life is perhaps the firſt ſtep of an infinite ſeries. Let us cheriſh this ſublime and elevating idea!

The doctrine of mechaniſm inſpires alſo charity and forbearance. A Neceſſarian may pity, but he cannot hate; he will likewiſe be active (in this he differs from a Predeſtinarian) as he knows the *end* ſtrictly to depend on the *means:* his ideas by no means open a door to licentiouſneſs: for ſhould he have an enlightened underſtanding, he ſees happineſs to be the reſult of order, and that vice and folly are ſynonimous terms. If he be a Chriſtian, and Chriſtianity alone affords any ſtability to our hopes of a future reſurrection, he muſt believe (it ſhould ſeem to me) in the final reſtitution of all things, though for a period, both here and hereafter the wicked will ſuffer the conſequences of their guilt, till refined and rectified by ſufferings, they are fitted for a ſyſtem of perfect purity and order; for a Being infinitely good, can bring nothing into exiſtence but for purpoſes

of

of wiſdom and kindneſs; nor can the introduction of moral evil (or to ſpeak more properly, natural evil, for traced to its ſource moral and natural evil are the ſame) be ſo well reconciled to our ideas of the perfections of the Deity on any other hypotheſis.

It has been objected, that the doctrine of final reſtitution, is contrary to the expreſs declarations of Scripture, and that could it be demonſtrated, it might have a tendency to relax the morals, by mitigating the fear of an eternal duration of future puniſhment. In reply to the firſt objection,—I grant that many particular paſſages in the New Teſtament, ſpeak of the miſery of the wicked in a future ſtate, as endleſs and unlimited. But at the ſame time, the general tendency of the Scriptures militate againſt this idea, by repreſenting the Deity as a kind Parent willing that all ſhould come to repentance, and having no pleaſure in the death of a ſinner, inflicting puniſhment only with a view to correct and amend. It may alſo be obſerved, that the language of Scripture is always plain and

popular, adapted not merely to the diſcerning few, but to the underſtandings of the bulk of mankind; nor could it have been ſo generally uſeful, had not this been the caſe. It may ſpeak of future puniſhment in an unlimited and unconditional manner, in order to produce a ſtronger effect; as God by Jonah threatened the deſtruction of the people of Ninevah, without giving them room to hope that their repentance might avert the impending judgment. It is alſo thought by commentators,—that the words tranſlated everlaſting and eternal, are not always to be underſtood as ſtrictly meaning infinite, or without end; though certainly intended to convey an idea of a duration ſo long, as to appear to us inconceivable, and almoſt indefinite. Many detached paſſages of Scripture when taken abſtractedly, ſeem to contradict each other; which is unavoidable from the neceſſity of its being written in a ſtyle appealing to the ſenſes, the only ſtyle which could have been generally underſtood: for inſtance—the Supreme Being is ſometimes repreſented with

with the paſſions and parts of a man, as being angry, grieved, appeaſed, repenting, &c. as having hands, arms, eyes, and ears; at others—as a ſpirit, whoſe thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways. Reaſon is to judge, and reconcile theſe apparent contrarieties. The ſafeſt, and propereſt method of forming juſt opinions on theſe ſubjects, is to lay little comparative ſtreſs on mere words, often ſymbolical, and highly figurative or accommodated to local circumſtances; but to riſe into ideas that harmonize beſt with the general tenure of revelation, and are analogous to nature and right reaſon. And theſe teach us (as I before obſerved) that a Being of infinite power and boundleſs benevolence could not have created intelligent creatures, without intending their ultimate benefit; and though on account of their limited capacities in this firſt ſtage of their exiſtence, they are liable to much evil and woe, yet theſe very ſufferings may have a rectifying tendency, and may be links in a chain of cauſes and effects, that will eventually terminate in the higheſt

felicity;* and this ariſes out of our frame and nature, and could not have been otherwiſe, unleſs God had at once formed us perfect, that is to ſay, had multiplied himſelf.

Nor will this hypotheſis, if throughly entered into, in the leaſt relax our morals, by abating our terrors of futurity. He who is ſenſible only to the ſlaviſh motive of fear, if he be not deterred by the apprehenſion of a puniſhment ſevere, and long beyond what he can conceive, will be no more rouſed ſhould you add the word eternal to it, a word of which he can form no idea.

And thoſe who thirſt after happineſs and purity, will be rendered more ſcrupulous and guarded by the belief of an exact retribution, as every advancement in virtue and piety they will conſider as a ſtep taken

* "When that wiſe Being who created us and placed "us here, ſaw the fair idea, he willed, by allowing it to "be ſo, that the paſſions ſhould unfold our reaſon, be- "cauſe he could ſee that preſent evil would produce "future good."

RIGHTS OF WOMAN.

towards

towards the ſtate in which centre all their hopes, and every deviation into vice as proportionably throwing them back; the ſtronger then their conviction of the *end* thus depending on the *means*, (to ſpeak in the neceſſarian dialect,) the more earneſtly will they endeavour to make their calling and election ſure. Such a manner of thinking will alſo yield ſupport in ſorrow and diſtreſs, as what we ſuffer here, in conſequence of our follies and crimes, will leſſen the ſum for which we are to account hereafter. A neceſſarian therefore (unleſs deranged in his faculties) will never be a ſuicide, nor can his remorſe and repentance—which are occaſioned by the retraction of his judgment from a change of circumſtances, conſequently of motives—and will be ſevere in proportion as the conſequences of his errors are threatening—ever terminate in abſolute deſpair. *

* Should the reader wiſh to enter more fully into the ſentiments here imperfectly ſketched, I would refer him to Hartley's Theory of Man, with notes and additions by Andrew Herman Piſtorius.

Theſe

Theſe ideas then do not in the leaſt invalidate the evidences of Chriſtianity, evidences which require only an examination to be approved, as affording the moſt powerful incitements to virtue. The precepts of the goſpel, if attended to ſufficiently to give them their effect, could not fail of making men wiſe, virtuous, and happy. The mercy and goodneſs of God in revelation are analogous to what we ſee in nature; but this analogy we muſt look for in the pure goſpel, uncorrupted by prieſtcraft, or the vain philoſophy of human creeds and ſyſtems; for ſo much has Chriſtianity been obſcured and mixed with droſs, as to uſe the words of an excellent writer,—"The world wants "almoſt to be re-chriſtianized." Its great outline is,—"That the Univerſal Parent of "mankind commiſſioned Jeſus Chriſt to "incite men to the practice of virtue, "by the aſſurance of his mercy to the peni-"tent, and of his purpoſe to raiſe to im-"mortal life all the virtuous and the good; "but to inflict an adequate puniſhment on "the wicked. In proof of this he wrought "many miracles, and after a public exe-

"cution

" cution roſe again from the dead;" as an example of the promiſed reſurrection. And the evidences for the truth of this religion, both external and internal, are worthy of your moſt ſerious inveſtigation: for though it cannot admit of a proper mathematical demonſtration, it carries with it the ſtrongeſt teſtimonies by which an hiſtorical fact can be aſcertained; and ſurely its doctrines are moſt important.

I ſhould not have ventured thus far, had I not had a confidence in your candor and good ſenſe; that confidence makes me think it unneceſſary to apologize for my prolixity; and indeed you have drawn it upon yourſelf and muſt take all the conſequences. I do not pretend to *intuitive* genius, or knowledge by inſpiration; my ideas are the reſult of having had leiſure for reading and inquiry, and where I have (knowingly) quoted the words of any author, I have marked the paſſage with inverted commas.

I am, Sir, with eſteem, &c.

AN

AN excellent and highly valued friend, to whom the preceding letters on materialiſm and neceſſity were communicated when in manuſcript, made ſome objections to their inſertion in a work of this nature; as conceiving the doctrines they inculcated were of the eſoteric kind, calculated only for the ſpeculative and the learned; and to the minds of common readers, who had not maturely weighed and conſidered the ſubjects, dangerous in their tendency.

I cannot help differing from this opinion, (though with the utmoſt reſpect and deference:) in the preſent univerſal diffuſion of literature, there are but very few of my readers whom I can poſſibly ſuppoſe entirely unacquainted with the numerous diſcuſſions to which theſe ſubjects have given riſe: and thoſe few will in all probability paſs over conſiderations on topics to which they feel themſelves unequal, and which conſequently will appear to them dry and unintereſting. To others, (particularly the youth

youth of both ſexes) who though not unacquainted with the doctrines, have yet given them but a ſlight and ſuperficial attention, I have endeavoured, without pretending to enter very deeply into queſtions properly philoſophical, with all the perſpicuity in my power to obviate thoſe alarming apprehenſions which originate in my idea merely from a terror of *names*, and which a little attention to *things* could ſcarcely fail of diſſipating. May I not alſo plead the example of the apoſtle Paul? who forbore not to treat of "things hard "to be underſtood," leſt the unlearned and unſtable ſhould wreſt them to their own deſtruction; and further what appears to us to be *truth*, it cannot be right to ſuppreſs, though we ſhould undoubtedly try to guard againſt any miſconception: for truth ultimately, can never be uſeleſs or pernicious. Solicitous to prevent any poſſible miſconſtruction, I cannot forbear adding as a ſupplement to the foregoing papers, a quotation of ſome length from Dr. Prieſtley's admirable preface to Collins's equally excellent inquiry concerning human liberty.

"The

" The only *ſeeming* advantage of thoſe " who oppoſe the doctrine of neceſſity, " ariſes from the conſideration of the in- " troduction of moral evil, and the con- " nection that it has with ſuffering. But " if the doctrine of preſcience be allowed, " (which every believer in revelation muſt " do, and without which there could be no " proper government of the world at all:) " whatever be the conſequence of appoint- " ment, will alſo be the conſequence of per- " miſſion. If good would not ultimately " ariſe from any kind or degree of evil, " natural or moral, a good Being would " not *permit* it: and if good would neceſ- " ſarily ariſe from it, he would be juſtified " in *appointing* it; being the proper and " neceſſary means to a valuable end.

" It is alſo ſaid, and with great plauſi- " bility, that there is no foundation for " praiſe or blame, merit or demerit, upon " the doctrine of neceſſity: but if the pro- " per definition of philoſophical liberty be " attended to, even the common idea of " praiſe or blame, will be perceived to be " as incompatible with it, as with the doc-

trine

" trine of neceſſity; for with what reaſon
" would any perſon be praiſed or blamed
" for an action which aroſe from no proper
" motive, but an arbitrary determination of
" the will independent of motive, and con-
" ſequently of fixed principle? And, if
" without attending to the popular idea of
" praiſe or blame, merit or demerit, we only
" conſider the effect of annexing pleaſing
" conſequences to what we call virtue, and
" unpleaſing ones to what we term vice,
" we ſhall ſee that ſuch a ſyſtem of govern-
" ment with reſpect to beings influenced by
" motives, will actually tend to produce
" virtue, by ſupplying ſufficient motives to
" the practice of it: and what elſe is the
" object and end of any wiſe and righteous
" government? the virtue of intelligent
" and ſocial creatures being neceſſarily con-
" nected with their happineſs."

Likewiſe to the ſame purpoſe from Collins's Treatiſe, page 86. " It is objected,
" if men are neceſſary agents, it is of no
" uſe to repreſent reaſons to them, or to
" entreat them, or to admoniſh them, or to
" blame them, or to praiſe them.

" To

" To which I anſwer, that all theſe, ac-
" cording to me, are neceſſary cauſes to
" determine certain men's wills to do what
" we deſire of them; and are therefore uſe-
" ful, as acting on ſuch neceſſary agents,
" to whom they are neceſſary cauſes of
" action: but would be of no uſe if men
" had free will, or their wills were not
" moved by them. So that they who make
" this objection, muſt run into the abſur-
" dities of ſaying—that cauſe is uſeful which
" is no cauſe of action, and ſerves not to
" change the will—and that cauſe is uſe-
" leſs which neceſſitates the effect."

No. XIV.

THERE are few talents more engaging, than the local and evaneſcent graces of converſable elocution, and few more rare: the great bane to the pleaſures of converſation is affectation, or the wiſh to appear to poſſeſs what nature has denied. While people are content to act in their natural character, if that is not very groſs and vitiated

vitiated indeed, though we may be neither improved nor entertained, we are ſeldom diſguſted. Inſipidity may make us yawn, and frivolity may fatigue, but it is affectation and hypocriſy only that provoke our indignation and contempt.

Fabio entertains his company with his ſympathy for the poor, his exquiſite ſenſibility of heart, his great generoſity to his debtors and dependents; and in order to exemplify theſe qualities, enters into long dull narratives, in every one of which he is the hero: but Fabio never pays his debts unleſs obliged by the law; can be guilty of a thouſand dirty actions when he thinks he ſhall eſcape detection; cheriſhes the moſt unrelenting malevolence againſt his more proſperous neighbours; and tortures his family by furious and inceſſant guſts of paſſion, which from taking no pains to controul, are become at the decline of life a ſort of inſanity, in which there are but few lucid intervals. Curio, intended by nature for an honeſt mechanic, but from the pro-

 feſſion

feſſion of an attorney habituated to quibbling, aſſumes the cenſorial chair as a philological critic: whatever party he enters into he involves in never ending diſputation, not a word is pronounced (for he ſeldom riſes above words) but it muſt be brought to the teſt of analytical accuracy, and every ſyllable that is uttered in the diſcuſſion, is fated to undergo the ſame laborious inveſtigation; ſo that at length, he bewilders himſelf and his company in a labyrinth of terms and definitions, from whence there is no eſcape, but by a precipitate retreat.

Pompoſus has read a few books ſuperficially, and ſeen a little of the town, and therefore on every occaſion takes the tone of a dictator—

"As who ſhould ſay, I am Sir oracle;
"And when I ope my mouth, let no dog bark."

Not a ſubject occurs on which he does not think himſelf capable of deciding: he is conſtantly producing exceptions, and applying them againſt general rules, and requiring

quiring demonſtration of ſelf-evident propoſitions. However groſs his blunders, it is not poſſible to confute him, for he underſtands nothing of reaſoning; and ſo ſublimely obſcure is the language in which he clothes his ideas, if ideas he has any, and ſo wide the circuit which he takes, as to elude and confound the moſt acute and patient hearer; and when ſuch are turning with diſguſt and wearineſs from his ridiculous aſſertions, in themſelves incapable of proof, he triumphs in his victory, miſtaking ſilent contempt for conviction and aſſent. Pyrrhus, whom a learned education, and a cold heart have made a ſophiſt and a pedant, either from ſpleen or vanity, or a mixture of both, without poſſeſſing any fixed principles of his own, invariably oppoſes the opinions of every ſociety in which he mixes; the never failing conſequences of which, are fierce debate, acrimonious ſarcaſms, or gloomy ſilence. "He (ſays La-" vater) who ſeeks to embitter innocent " pleaſures, has a canker at his heart."

Philander wiſhes to be thought a man of genius, and having ſometimes obſerved in ſuperior minds a whimſical deviation from common modes and cuſtoms, occaſioned perhaps by mental abſtraction, or by ſome ſtrong originality of character, affects a wild and eccentric behaviour: and from aſſociating the ideas of great talents with great irregularities, expects that it will be taken for granted—that where the ſhadow is, there muſt be the ſubſtance; without reflecting, that there may be the ſhadow of a ſhade. "The vulgar trace your faults, (ſays Shen-"ſtone) thoſe you have in common with "themſelves; but they have no idea of "your excellencies, to which they have no "pretenſion." Orontes, whom a few ſteps into the world have metamorphoſed from an awkward booby, into a pert coxcomb, equally ignorant, as incapable of the dignity which ſenſe and virtue confers, affects to be a libertine and a debauchee, becauſe he conceives it manly to ſet at defiance all laws, both human and divine; while he ſacrifices his health and his fortune, merely to prove—that he has a weak head, a depraved

praved heart, and a bad taſte. Palemon, educated for trade, but enriched by a lottery ticket; whom coarſe organs have incapacitated for delicacy or elegance of mind, in deſpite of nature would be thought a connoiſſeur, and a man of taſte: he languiſhes at an opera, attends every collection of pictures, runs over the terms of art, follows implicitly where faſhion leads; and is not likely to recover from this fit of awkward imitation, till his exhauſted finances ſhall once more compel him to become an induſtrious and uſeful member of ſociety.

Clermont, though he poſſeſſes neither vivacity or fancy, is ever affecting to be witty: he ſeldom riſes higher than a pun, and that frequently a lame one, which he repeats inceſſantly, vainly endeavouring by his own example to perpetuate the forced and languid ſmile. Mercator, laying it down as a maxim,—that every honeſt man is to be dealt with as if he were a knave; and that a wiſe man will benefit himſelf by flattering the weakneſſes of others; accoſts

every one with a ſmile, a cordial ſhake of the hand, and profeſſions of ſervice and friendſhip; by which the frank and the guileleſs are for a ſhort time deceived: but a little obſervation convinces them, that thoſe indiſcriminate careſſes, which when known to be indiſcriminate, none conſider as a compliment, muſt neceſſarily be inſincere: and the meritricious varniſh detected, the canvaſs beneath appears with two-fold deformity. Crito is a profound news-paper politician, and affects an inſight into all the arcana of government; but groſsly ignorant of firſt principles, and overbearing and impetuous in his temper, from a conſciouſneſs of muſcular ſtrength; when his antagoniſt reaſons too cloſely, to eſcape the "clubs of argument," he avails himſelf of his ſkill in the ſcience of boxing, and ſilences the adverſary whom he deſpaired of confuting. It would be an endleſs and invidious taſk, to mark the various diſcordant and jarring qualities which tend to untune the chords of harmony, and cloud the ſocial hour. The tedious ſtory-teller, the pert coxcomb, the egotiſt, the dogmatiſt,

dogmatiſt, the ſophiſt, the cenſorious, the malicious, and the vain, by turns provoke and weary the moſt patient ear.

But when eſcaping from folly and impertinence, to the circle of cordial friends—

" Attun'd to happy uniſon of ſoul!
" To whoſe exalting eye, a fairer world,
" Of which the vulgar never had a glimpſe,
" Diſplays it charms."

It is then the higher powers of our nature find their proper gratification.——Friendſhip is a term often uſed, but little comprehended; it muſt be founded on principle, and ſanctioned by reaſon; cemented by tender confidence, and aſſured by reſpect; it is of all affections the moſt exalted and diſintereſted: nothing ſordid, mean, or baſe can exiſt with it.—He whoſe general converſe is not unaffected, open, ingenuous; whoſe features do not vary with his feelings; whoſe practice is not conſiſtent with his theory; who is not humane and conſiderate to his inferiors, firm and dauntleſs with his ſuperiors, engaging

and kind to his equals; juſt in his dealings, candid in his temper, liberal in his opinions, enlarged in his conceptions, inflexible in his integrity, warm in his affections, and virtuous in his conduct,—is incapable of the ſacred flame of friendſhip! Neither can he who feels not devotional affections, who loves not God, ever properly be ſaid to love his neighbour; ſenſibility of heart, if not quenched by ſenſual indulgence, ever leads to piety, and guides us to the ſource of all lovelineſs and excellence: the precepts and duties of religion are all included in benevolence—for "God is love." The Heathens have erected altars to friendſhip. "It was natural for untaught ſuperſtition "to deify the ſource of every good. They "worſhipped friendſhip, which animates "the moral world, on the ſame principle "as they paid adoration to the Sun, which "gives life to the world of nature."

No. XV.

To Amasia.

YOU require my opinion on a very difficult ſubject, a ſubject upon which clouds and darkneſs reſt. I do not pretend to have made up my mind on the nature, and degree of happineſs reſerved for the virtuous in a future ſyſtem of exiſtence. Every poſition has its difficulties; yet, may we not juſtly hope,—that as virtuous friendſhip affords the pureſt ſatisfaction in this world, it will alſo conſtitute a great part of our enjoyment in the next? This is a rational, a ſcriptural, and a ſoothing idea; and beſides affording the conſolatory expectation of renewing thoſe connections, the touching and tender ties of which have been diſſolved by death, is a ſtimulas to mental improvement, by giving riſe to the emulous wiſh, of preparing ourſelves by cultivating our intellectual powers, for the ſociety of the great and good minds, which we have here been prevented from enjoying by local circumſtances.

I am

I am likewiſe ſometimes inclined to think —that there will be a future ſtate of recompenſe for the whole ſenſitive, as well as intelligent creation; otherwiſe, thoſe unfortunate animals who are victims to the barbarity of human brutes, are created only for miſery: a merciful Being muſt ſurely, in forming creatures capable of ſenſation, have intended their happineſs, according to their different capacities of enjoyment; and raiſed man above the reſt, not to tyranniſe, but as he is endowed with faculties ſuperior to all the other orders of material creation, to rule with moderation, and guide all according to the purpoſes of heaven; ſo that each, is made for each, for reciprocal benefit and kindneſs. But to return.

Reſpecting the exact nature of the happineſs reſerved for thoſe, who after "continuing patient in well-doing will reap "if they faint not,"—the Scriptures are ſilent, merely ſpeaking of it, as what eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive: leſt, as Dr. Blair admirably obſerves, we

we ſhould be ſo abſorbed in the contemplation of future felicity, as to be unfitted for properly fulfilling the duties by which we are to acquire virtue in our ſeveral ſtations in this life. The ſilence of revelation on this topic has given riſe to innumerable conjectures, coloured by the different tempers, and imaginations of the ſpeculators; not any of which give me entire ſatisfaction. Highly as I revere Dr. Prieſtley, and much as I am indebted to his writings for liberal, ſober, and juſt concluſions on various ſubjects, I cannot perfectly accord with him on this: I love not to think, that the next world will not materially differ from this, or that we may be obliged to labour for our ſubſiſtence. An unquenchable thirſt after perfection, an ever ardent and reſtleſs purſuit after ſomething—" higher, more " powerful, more living than viſible na- " ture"—-ſurely point to a nobler deſtination! Neither am I at all inclined to adopt the torpid doctrine of a heaven of reſt; ſtill leſs the monotonous one of eternal hallelujahs, or pſalmody; nor the myſtic reveries of inceſſant, intenſe, extatic contemplation.

templation. The notion of ſoaring from planet to planet, on celeſtial embaſſies, however flattering to the active emulation of our nature, alſo appears to me more Miltonic, than ſcriptural, or philoſophical. On theſe topics we can only reaſon from analogy, taking Revelation for our guide; which while it promiſes the reſurrection of the body, ſpeaks of that body as changed and ſpiritualized. "Sown a natural, but "raiſed a ſpiritual body." By which I underſtand enlightened, refined, and purged from groſs ſelf-love.

In this world, intellectual pleaſures afford the moſt elevated and real gratification,—the purſuit after truth, the benevolent affections—

"Knowledge, conſcious peace, and virtue pure."

May we not then ſuppoſe, that in a ſuperior degree, and in conſtant progreſſion and improvement, ſuch will be the ſources of our felicity in the next? I cannot conceive of greater happineſs, than in the enjoyment of a ſociety conſiſting only of the wiſe

wiſe and virtuous; where there will be no jarring intereſts, no ſordid paſſions, no narrow prejudices, nothing little, mean, or vile: add to this immortality, and what remains to be deſired? When hiſtory brings all ages to view, and we trace the progreſs of heroic virtue; when we hear of, and read the works by which great men have perpetuated their names; when we turn with horror and contempt from vice and folly, and ſigh for an opportunity to inſpect the ſacred moments of elevated minds: when we regret the lapſe of time, and the hours that paſs away unenjoyed, and unimproved; when we feel the approach of age, benumbing our faculties, and blunting our ſenſibility; when we—

"Weep o'er friendſhips early bier,
"And drop the tear on beauty's tomb:"—

What an exhilarating, what a cheering proſpect, is that of waking to flouriſh in immortal bloom! and joining the ſociety of the juſt made perfect! It is this hope only which can inſpire true fortitude, and ſuſtain in the trying hour. Virtue is undoubtedly

in

in a great meaſure its own reward; as vice, being contrary to the frame of our nature, carries with it conſequences neceſſarily deſtructive: yet we need a ſtimulas ſtill more vivid and powerful; and this Chriſtianity affords, in teaching a reſurrection from the dead, and a future moral retribution. He who wiſhes to deprive us of this hope, is an enemy to his ſpecies, and to ſociety, and ought to be ſhunned and dreaded.—"Avoid "thoſe, who under the pretence of explain-"ing natural cauſes, plant the moſt de-"ſtructive doctrines in the hearts of men: "who while they deprive the afflicted of "the laſt conſolation in their miſery, take "from the rich and powerful, the only "check to the indulgence of their paſſions, "and eradicate from the heart the remorſe "of guilt, and the hopes of virtue, abſurdly "calling themſelves the friends, and the be-"nefactors of mankind."*

Every opinion that has a virtuous tendency, is entitled to our reſpect and ſupport; ſuch a tendency affords the teſt of

* Rouſſeau.

truth.

truth. If it were poſſible for a meſſenger from heaven to teach a doctrine malevolent in its principle, or pernicious in its practice, we ought to reject it with horror. Virtue and happineſs can never be ſeparated, and are almoſt ſynonimous: adventitious, and external circumſtances are lighter than vanity, compared with the peace which reſults from a well-ordered mind. As real happineſs then is only to be obtained by cultivating and improving the higher powers of our nature, and in proportion to our progreſs in wiſdom and virtue, it will be vain to expect a glorious immortality from uſing particular phraſes, or ſubſcribing to certain opinions; unleſs purity of conduct, and ſpirituality of mind, fit us for thoſe regions where nothing ſenſual, or worldly can enter. Let us not deceive ourſelves, but remember the caution of our Saviour. "It is not he that ſayeth Lord, "Lord, but he who doeth the will of the "Father which is in Heaven, that ſhall "enter into the kingdom of glory."

I am, &c.

No. XVI.

No. XVI.

To Amasia.

I Entirely agree with you, my friend, that the groſs Calviniſtic notion of original ſin, is as injurious to the perfections of the Divine Being, as ſhocking to reaſon: yet I think it cannot be denied that bad example, and hereditary phyſical cauſes may have ſome effect upon the moral character; and theſe in a meaſure, from the earlieſt ages (or if you pleaſe from Adam himſelf) may have affected poſterity. But as a conſtitutional diſeaſe may by proper precautions and remedies be much meliorated, if not entirely eradicated; ſo the diſorders of the mind, by early good habits, care and attention, may in a ſimilar manner be ſoftened, or rectified. This conviction ſhould incite us to watchfulneſs and diligence, to "work out "our ſalvation with fear and trembling."

Human nature has been much calumniated, and the calumny glances at the Being who produced it. Is it poſſible to imagine that

that Infinite purity could implant in the creatures of his power, a natural propenſity to evil, and miſchief? The very idea is blaſphemous: on the contrary, the whole ſtructure of mind and body diſpoſes to virtue, ſince every deviation from it involves the criminal in miſery and diſorder. We are haſtily led to conclude that vice predominates in ſociety, becauſe it is more obvious and glaring; and few comparatively, have either capacity, leiſure, or opportunity to mark the nicer ſhades and diſcriminations of character. We are ſtruck with the fact, but perceive not the chain of gradations, and motives that led to it; nor the virtues that are ſometimes engrafted on the ruling paſſion.

" What crops of wit, and honeſty appear,
" From ſpleen, from obſtinacy, hate, or fear."

" The thread of our life is of a mingled " yarn." Nature ſeldom produces either heroes, or monſters; there are none ſo perfect, as to be free from ſome darker tints; nor any ſo vile, as to deſerve unmixed abhorrence: actions which at firſt view fill us

with admiration, or with horror, when analyzed more accurately, will admit of many deductions and extenuations. Our virtues and our vices border on each other: nice is the boundary that ſeparates them. The ſame energy, called forth by different circumſtances and aſſociations, may give riſe to heroic virtue, or daring outrages: great talents have alternately been the bleſſings, and the ſcourges of ſociety. The inconſiſtencies, and inequalities of ſuperior characters may perhaps bring them nearer to a level with common minds, than is generally imagined. We are all the children of one Parent, who regards his moral offſpring with a more equal eye, than a ſuperficial obſerver at one haſty glance might conclude. Not that I would be underſtood to confound all diſtinctions betwixt virtue and vice; there are undoubtedly many gradations between a Socrates, and Anytus, who by falſe accuſations deprived the world of its then greateſt ornament. Yet they both acted under the general plan of Providence, which finally muſt intend, not merely the good of the whole, but of each individual;

vidual; though a far greater degree of puniſhment will be neceſſary for the rectification of the greater degree of turpitude.

The firſt and nobleſt characters that have adorned humanity, have generally ariſen out of ſevere trials, and adverſe circumſtances.

" So many great
" Illuſtrious ſpirits, have converſed with woe;
" Have in her ſchool been taught; as are enough
" To conſecrate diſtreſs."

The goſpel alſo teacheth that " whom the " Almighty loveth, he chaſteneth." May we not conclude from hence, that as gold is tried in the fire, ſo the human character is perfected by ſufferings; and thoſe from whom the droſs is ſeparated in this firſt ſtage of exiſtence, are aſſuredly nearer to that ſtate of pure and perfect enjoyment, where our faculties will be no longer enigmatical; and where theſe glorious capacities, here too frequently only inlets to pain, will find their proper gratification? Whether we reaſon from experience, obſervation, or analogy,

every concluſion goes to prove, that this world is a ſtate of diſcipline and progreſſion, and can never be

" The final iſſue of the works of God,
" For ever riſing with the riſing mind."

I am, &c.

No. XVII.

A FRAGMENT.

In the Manner of the old Romances.

THE ſun was ſinking in the boſom of the Weſtern Ocean, when after a bright day in the autumnal ſeaſon, the young and beauteous Cleanthe ſtrayed into a thick foreſt, that ſpread its ſolemn ſhade behind the ſtately caſtle of the baron her father. The faint tints of gold and purple that ſtreaked the varying clouds, the laſt ſighs of the ſinking breeze, the variegated hues of the fading foliage, the plaintive cooings of the wood-pigeon, and the hollow mur-

murs

murs of a diſtant torrent—conſpired to ſooth her ſoul into a tender and pleaſing melancholy; and awaken thoſe lively and vivid trains of fancy, that by degrees abſtract the mind from ſenſible objects, and bewilder it amid diſtant and viſionary purſuits.

Reſting on a bank of camomile, at the foot of an aged oak, ſhe perceived not that her hair was wet with the dew, and that the ſhades of evening veiled the proſpect in darkneſs. She was at length rouſed from her reverie by the ſoft and melodious ſound of a lute, which floating on the wind, gradually ſwelled into notes of joy and triumph, and then trembling as in broken air,* melted away in remote and languid ſtrains. A deep ſilence ſucceeded—interrupted only at diſtant intervals by the cry of the night raven: the moon roſe, and tinged the waving branches with ſilver. Cleanthe ſtarted; and gazing wildly around, perceived with terror ſhe had wandered out of her knowledge, and of the various paths

* "In broken air, trembling, the wild muſic floats."
POPE.

which preſented themſelves, was at a loſs to conjecture which would conduct her to the peaceful, parental aſylum ſhe had unwarily quitted.

In the midſt of this perplexity—her ears were aſſailed by the moſt mournful, and piercing ſhrieks; a thick cloud covered the moon, out of which darted inceſſant flaſhes of blue and ſulphureous lightning; the trees ſhook, the caverns of the foreſt groaned, and the roarings of ſavage beaſts reſounded on every ſide. A mortal paleneſs covered the cheek of Cleanthe—her limbs trembled—a cold damp bedewed her face—and ſhe ſunk ſpiritleſs on the earth. From this trance ſhe was awakened by a claſhing of ſwords, and ſaw approaching her two knights compleatly armed, (mounted on fiery courſers richly capariſoned,) who ſeemed engaged in a fierce and deſperate combat. Collecting her ſpirits ſhe aroſe, and winged by fear, ruſhed precipitately through the entangled branches, till faint and ſcarce able to reſpire, ſhe found herſelf incapable of proceeding. She ſtopped—and looking fearfully

fearfully forwards,—eſpied a glimmering light through the trees, which appeared to proceed from the boſom of a cypreſs ſhade, but a few paces diſtant; ſhe preſſed onwards, with mingled hope and apprehenſion, and advancing nearer, beheld the pillars and broken arches of a ruined abbey. She entered trembling,—and directing her ſteps towards a long aiſle which remained yet entire, in the centre of which a burning lamp was ſuſpended, ſaw at the foot of an altar half deſtroyed by time, a female figure ſtretched on the pavement, who ſeemed as if expiring; her eyes were cloſed, and her features livid and ghaſtly: a ſtream of blood flowed from her boſom—one hand graſped a dagger—the other held a crucifix to her heart. Cleanthe ſtruck with horror and aſtoniſhment, unable to move either to aſſiſt, or fly from the miſerable victim extended before her, gazed on her with unutterable anguiſh. The dying phantom at length opening her eyes—turned them mournfully on Cleanthe. Whoever thou art! (ſaid ſhe) in a faultering and hollow tone of voice—behold in this awful ſcene, which heaven

permits thee to witneſs, the fatal effects of heedleſſneſs, guilt, and criminal deſpair! ſhe ceaſed—and ſcreaming wildly—in convulſive pangs breathed her laſt. No ſooner had the guilty ſoul forſook the lacerated body, than the light was extinguiſhed, the earth trembled and ſhook, and loud peals of thunder, mixed with the howling of winds, and the roaring of waters, confounded and overwhelmed the remaining ſpirits of the terrified maid, who ſhrieked aloud, and again fell motionleſs on the ground.

After a few minutes returning to life and recollection—with pleaſure and ſurpriſe ſhe found herſelf reclining on a bank of violets, beneath an arbour of roſes and jaſmine, in an extenſive and beautiful garden, ſurrounded with all that can delight and exhilarate the ſenſes. The ſun ſhone in meridian brightneſs—cool and gentle zephyrs refreſhed the air, perfumed with aromatic odours. The trees were at once loaded with the richeſt fruits of autumn, and ornamented with the bloſſoms of the ſpring; the bees hummed among the beds of wild thyme, and the nightingale

nightingale warbled in the thicket; the lamb brouſed on the lawn, and the kid ſported in the ſhade. Soft muſic floated—"above, about, and underneath"—ſent by "the unſeen genius of the wood." From every bower was heard the voice of feſtivity—every object breathed voluptuous pleaſure, and refined delight.

The terrors which had lately agitated the gentle boſom of Cleanthe quickly ſubſided—the roſes again crimſoned her cheek—her eyes ſparkled with joy—and her ſoul diſſolved in ſoftneſs. Riſing to explore a ſcene ſo new and paradiſaical, ſhe ſaw advancing towards her, arrayed in flowing veſtments, and crowned with immortal amaranths, the brave and beauteous Alcanzor; (for whom ſhe had long cheriſhed a tender and faithful affection,) grace and ſprightlineſs animated his form, and more than mortal beauty glowed in his face:—drawing near he knelt at her feet.———A train of nymphs crowded around, and taking her hand, conducted her to a temple ſupported by Corinthian pillars, entwined with

with chaplets of flowers, and throwing over her a ſnowy mantle, embroidered with ſilver, hailed her faireſt of the fair! Her ſenſes ſwam in pleaſure, while half fainting ſhe leant on her beloved Alcanzor. A damſel more lovely than the reſt quitted her companions, and approached the enamoured pair. Preſenting them with a bowl containing an intoxicating mixture, drink! (ſaid ſhe) and partake of immortal felicity, of happineſs that will experience neither viciſſitude, nor decay. The lover ſeizing the bowl, drank deep of its contents, and raiſing it to the lips of Cleanthe, ſhe was about to taſte—when a low melancholy voice ſounded in her ear—forbear! call to remembrance the dying victim—the ſtreaming blood—the convulſive pangs—the deſpairing groans!—thoughtleſs folly firſt expoſed thee to danger—thou art now ſailing down the ſtream of pleaſure—and advancing towards the ſhoals of vice—deſpair, death, and deſtruction are behind! It ceaſed—Cleanthe ſtarted—and daſhed on the floor the poiſonous beverage: a thick cloud filled the temple—it tottered from its foundation,

tion, and falling with a hideous craſh—the whole viſion faded away.

Cleanthe looked around, and beheld the moon and ſtars glittering over her head, the waving foliage of the foreſt which ſheltered her father's manſion, and the welcome portico of his hoſpitable gate. She haſtened towards it, and ruſhing in, from the ſoothings of parental tenderneſs ſought conſolation and repoſe for her perturbed and agitated ſpirits.

No. XVIII.

THE HERMIT.

An Oriental Tale.

All paſſions in exceſs are crimes—
Submit thy fate to heaven's indulgent care,
Though all ſeems loſt, 'tis impious to deſpair:
The tracts of Providence like rivers wind,
Here run before us—there retreat behind;
And though immerged in earth from human eyes,
Again break forth, and more conſpicuous riſe.

NEAR the Northern boundaries of Perſia, on the banks of the river Aras (which riſing in the mountains of Ararat falls

falls into the Caſpian ſea) grew an ancient and beautiful foreſt, whoſe friendly ſhade ſhielding the earth from the ſcorching rays of the ſun, preſerved beneath a never-fading verdure: aromatic ſhrubs breathing odoriferous odours, and flowers painted with all the glowing and variegated tints of nature, were ſcattered in wild profuſion amid trees bending beneath the golden fruit of ſummer. Birds of various coloured plumage mingled their notes with the ſound of a diſtant cataract that ſoothed the penſive ear with faint and hollow murmurs. The palm, the cypreſs, the olive, and the plane-tree united their branches, and cheared the eye with their diverſified foliage, contraſted with the diſtant proſpect of craggy and cloud-capt mountains. Nature ſeemed to have combined in this favoured ſpot all that the imagination can conceive of beautiful and ſublime. A moſſy cavern enboſomed in a thicket of citron and myrtle, afforded every convenient and deſirable accommodation, with but little aſſiſtance from art, and had long been venerated as the

reſidence

reſidence of the Hermit Zeibriel, reſpected and beloved for his wiſdom and virtue, and reverenced for his age. A beard of ſnowy white reached his girdle, majeſty ſoftened with benignity beamed from his eyes, and from his lips flowed perſuaſive eloquence, ſweet as the honey of Hybla. The neighbouring youth quitted their ſports and occupations to attend to his precepts: he taught them equity and juſtice, tempered with mercy; ſobriety, temperance, benevolence, and moderation. He inculcated on their minds the ſublime duties of religion, and conducted them through the paths of ſcience, enlightened their underſtandings, expanded their ideas, tranquillized their tempers, and amended their hearts.

Frequently as they hung on his accents with filial reverence and delight, he would endeavour to moderate the ardor of youth, by painting with all the energy of truth and affection the danger of ſuffering the heart to be miſled by impetuous and irregular feelings: on ſuch occaſions he ſpoke with a peculiar and affecting fervor, his voice would

would ſeem ſmothered with ſighs, his whole frame diſordered with an unuſual agitation, and he evidently appeared to ſuffer while he ſtruggled to addreſs them with compoſure, and to ſubdue the emotions of his ſoul. The ſtrongeſt paſſions (my children, ſaid he) too often accompany ſuperior talents, and endanger the moſt amiable and elevated minds: refined ſenſibility, and a glowing imagination give energy to thoſe ſenſations, which diveſted of the colouring of fancy, and contemplated through the cool medium of reaſon, would quickly ſubſide, and leave the calm ſoul aſtoniſhed at the tumult excited by the ſenſes, which if not timely checked, might have overwhelmed with reſiſtleſs power its temporal and eternal peace. Beware then of the firſt approaches of thoſe inſidious ſentiments which flatter while they deſtroy; they influence by gentle and almoſt imperceptible degrees, and the whole ſoul is affected ere you are aware. Like the poiſon of the aſp concealed under a thicket of roſes, death lurks beneath the intoxicating fragrance. As an overwhelming torrent carries away

with

with impetuous force the hamlet with its terrified inhabitants, the ſhepherd with his innocent flock; and ſweeps with unrelenting fury the teeming harveſt of the coming year; ſo vehement and irregular paſſion debilitates the underſtanding, obſcures the divine irradiations of reaſon, enervates that fortitude and ſelf-poſſeſſion which are the glory of a human being, and bears down with deſtructive violence all the faculties of the mind, and the virtues of the heart which oppoſe its progreſs.

But theſe fierce and uncontroulable emotions are finely contraſted by thoſe gentle and amiable affections, which ennoble the mind, and meliorate the heart; that placid and affecting tenderneſs, which being conſiſtent with order, and having virtue for its baſis, calls forth new graces, and elevates the ſoul that cheriſhes it to more heroic goodneſs: that general and ſocial philanthropy which is an emanation of the divine perfections, and which embraces as brethren the whole human ſpecies, however diverſified by opinion, mode, or complexion:

complexion: and the graceful humanity which extends ſympathy and protection, not merely to the rational, but the whole animal creation, proportioning its kindneſs to the diſtreſs of the object which ſolicits its aid.

The few incidents of my life (continued the ſage) will afford little variety in the recital; yet to the attentive mind the relation of my errors may convey a leſſon not wholly unuſeful, or unimportant. "Happy are thoſe who wiſe by the ex-"perience of others, take of the fruit al-"ready gathered, leſt a ſerpent lurk un-"der the leaves, and ſting them ere they "are aware." I was born in the city of Iſpahan: my father who enjoyed an honourable and lucrative poſt in that ſplendid and magnificent court, was ſummoned by the angel of death to render an account of his actions, at the high and awful tribunal before which the greateſt earthly potentates muſt be arraigned, juſt as I had attained my twentieth year. A few hours before he expired he ſent for me into his preſence,

preſence, and endeavoured by a diſcourſe full of piety and reſignation to calm the ſorrows with which he ſaw me overwhelmed. Reſtrain, my ſon (ſaid he) thoſe expreſſions of grief which diſcompoſe the ſerenity I have been endeavouring to preſerve. In a few hours I ſhall be beyond the reach of human cares, experiencing thoſe exquiſite and celeſtial delights which our holy prophet has promiſed to the faithful. My anxieties at this moment ariſe only from the idea of leaving my beloved Zeibriel at ſo early a period of life, in a world abounding with temptation and danger. Preſerve, my ſon, engraven on the tablets of thy heart, thoſe virtuous maxims which it has been the ſtudy of my life to implant in thy young and flexible mind. I leave thee wealth ſufficient, not only to gratify every rational and juſt deſire, but alſo to adminiſter to the wants of the neceſſitous, to protect the oppreſſed, and to patroniſe obſcure and neglected merit. When thou haſt depoſited my remains in the mauſoleum of my anceſtors, retire from the contagion of a court whoſe air breathes voluptuouſneſs and vice,

and where ſnares and death are hid beneath the ſmile of the deceitful paraſite.

My father (ſaid Zeibriel) was proceeding in his diſcourſe, when the dread meſſenger of death put a period to his exiſtence, and left me overwhelmed in a ſtupor of grief, that for ſome time rendered me incapable of feeling the whole extent of my misfortune: but the lenient hand of time mellowed the acute diſtreſs which I felt for the loſs of this amiable parent into a tender and melancholy regret, which alſo ſubſided by degrees, and my heart began once more to glow with the ardour of youth, and my eyes to ſparkle with hope and hilarity. The pleaſures and elegancies of a court were too alluring to a youthful mind, to be reſigned without a painful effort: the recollection of my father's injunctions became irkſome to me, and I endeavoured to prevent their intruſion by engaging in ſucceſſive parties of amuſement and diſſipation. A boundleſs taſte for expence ſoon drew about me a crowd of vain and licentious companions: prompted by their flattery and

and careſſes, and inſtigated by the prevalence of their example, the virtuous precepts I had imbibed from education faded from my memory, as the grey miſts of the morning vaniſh before the riſing day. The mind, which once deviates from the paths of rectitude, ſinks by rapid degrees from indolence to diſſipation, from diſſipation to vice, and at length perpetrates, without remorſe, crimes, which it once ſhuddered at the idea of; as the ſtone bounding over the declivity, acquires greater force and velocity, the nearer it approaches the vale.

But from this licentious dream I began at length to be rouſed by the conſequences of my depravity. Pleaſures, riotous and intoxicating, were ſucceeded by ſatiety and laſſitude: I found my health impaired, my fortune impoveriſhed, and my peace deſtroyed, without any other compenſation than a few hours of fallacious and deceitful enjoyment, which left my ſpirits exhauſted and depreſſed, in proportion as they had been elated, and afforded not any ſatisfaction worthy of a rational and reflecting

being. Theſe convictions received additional force from a diſappointment I had recently ſuffered in the purſuit of a young beauty, the daughter of the virtuous Myrza, by whom my addreſs had been rejected (notwithſtanding the advantages of my rank and fortune) on account of my immoral and profligate character. In vain I endeavoured to obliterate from my remembrance the idea of this amiable virgin! her image was engraven on my ſoul in indelible characters, and ſo powerfully revived the virtuous impreſſions I had received in my earlieſt years, that my former companions became diſtaſteful to me, their mirth impertinent, and the revelry in which they preſſed me to unite with them, now excited in my mind no other ſenſations than thoſe of horror and diſguſt: yet enervated by voluptuouſneſs, I was ſtill incapable of reſiſting the ſolicitation of aſſociates, who had acquired by habit an unbounded influence over me, and I ſaw my ſubſtance daily decreaſing, without retrenching my expences, or forming any plans for the regulation of my conduct.

But

But I was awakened from this torpor of the ſoul by the importunity of creditors, whom I was unable to ſatisfy, which was ſoon followed by the deſertion of thoſe, whoſe friendſhip I had been ſo infatuated as to ſuppoſe would be my conſolation in that adverſe ſituation, to which their pernicious counſels and contagious example had reduced me. Obliged to deliver up the ſhattered remnant of my fortunes, and avoided by thoſe who had baſked in the ſun-ſhine of my proſperity, I wandered into the deſart, a wretched outcaſt from ſociety, and rolled myſelf in the ſand in frenzied and agonizing ſorrow: but the cruel and ſevere paſſions by which my agitated mind was torn, exhauſted themſelves by their violence, and were ſucceeded by the dread ſtillneſs of deſpair. My ſenſes ſeemed benumbed, and a total inſenſibility overpowered every faculty, when methought a ſudden radiance ſhone around me, and I felt myſelf arouſed by the touch of a celeſtial meſſenger, who regarded me with a ſevere aſpect, rendered yet more awful by the ſplendor of etherial beauty. Zeibriel (ſaid he, while his voice

ſhook my ſoul with guilty terrors) I am commiſſioned by the Moſt High,—by Him who dwelleth in light to which none can approach! to ſpeak unto thee words of correction and counſel. Thou haſt miſtaken the end of thy being, and vainly ſought for happineſs in thoſe gratifications, which the animal creation partake in common with thee, inſtead of elevating thy mind to the higher and more exquiſite ſources of felicity, of which ſuperior and intelligent natures are ſo glorioufly capable. But thy errors, and thy vices have brought with them their attendant miſeries: pleaſure has been followed by ſatiety, revelling by laſſitude, inebriety by diſeaſe, and prodigality by contempt and poverty. Thy mind is lacerated by diſappointment and remorſe, and thy health debilitated by exceſs and luxury. Humbled in the duſt, thou art neceſſitated to adore that Providence, whoſe juſt and wiſe diſpenſations have allotted to folly and vice, even in this lower world, (where his moral and eternal diſtributions are but commencing) a recompence dependent on, and ſpringing from

the

the ſame ſource with that criminality, which ſo juſtly incurs the divine diſpleaſure. Repent! and reform thy conduct, or tremble at the vengeance which awaits thee: the trial is at hand—be firm! and engrave on the tablet of thy ſoul theſe certain truths—That the offspring of vice and folly are infamy and death, and that happineſs is the child of truth and order.

The meſſenger of the Omnipotent here ceaſed, and aſcended to the third heaven: the ſeverity which clouded the divine effulgence of his countenance ſubſided as he withdrew, and his features ſoftened into a heavenly benignity. A ray of mingled fortitude and hope penetrated my boſom: thoſe turbulent paſſions which agitated my mind, as the ſouthern whirlwind ſweeps the ſandy deſart, were gradually huſhed into peace; tears of penitence and reſignation flowed from my eyes, and proſtrate on the earth, I venerated the judgments of the Almighty, and reverenced his perfections. As the burning ſands of Lybia imbibe the refreſhing dews of heaven, ſo did my heart

expand to welcome the new ſenſations of piety and conſolation. Serene and calm, I aroſe, and, wrapped in contemplation, wandered towards the city, unconſcious of the path I took; when I was awakened from my reverie by a ſlave, whom I preſently recogniſed as an attendant of one of my former companions. Zeibriel (ſaid he, accoſting me) my maſter, who ſincerely laments thy misfortunes, would ſpeak with thee on buſineſs of importance. I made no reply, but ſuffered him to conduct me to the manſion of his Lord, who waited for me in a private apartment of his palace. I have need of thy ſervices; (ſaid he;) be diligent and diſcreet, and thou ſhalt be reinſtated in thy former affluence, revenge thyſelf on a man by whom thou haſt been treated with contempt, and poſſeſs the beauteous Almerine, whom thou haſt long ſecretly loved.

My heart throbbed with tumultuous expectation, as he ſpoke, and I felt a glow of exultation ſuffuſe my cheek; but a ſudden reflection checked the riſing emotion, and

and fixing my eyes on the ground, I liſtened in ſilence to his propoſal. But how did my ſoul ſhake with horror, when this execrable monſter, to gratify an inordinate avarice, and to revenge ſome fancied indignity, revealed to me a ſcheme for the aſſaſſination of the virtuous Myrza, whoſe daughter and effects he meant to ſeize with ſacrilegious and rapacious hands; and entreating my concurrence and aſſiſtance, (which my forlorn ſituation gave him no reaſon to doubt) promiſed to reward my fidelity and ſecrecy with the charming Almerine, and an equal ſhare of the ſpoil. I received this deteſtable and criminal propoſition with the indignation it merited, and was quitting his preſence with averſion and diſdain, when the vile and cruel traitor drawing a poniard, ruſhed ſuddenly upon me, and endeavoured to plunge it in my heart: thou ſhalt not (ſaid he in a furious tone) by thy cowardice and puſillanimity diſappoint my juſt vengeance, and live to betray the ſecret I have been ſo weak as to intruſt thee with. His violence threw him off his guard, I wreſted the dagger from his hand, and incenſed by his

his villany and perfidy, buried it in his boſom. He groaned, and fell.—I quitted with precipitation a houſe, in which it was no longer ſafe for me to remain, and haſtening to court, ruſhed into the preſence of my ſovereign, and proſtrating myſelf at the foot of the throne, recited the circumſtances I have related, and implored the royal clemency.

Selim the magnificent, who then ſwayed the ſceptre of Perſia, (ordering me to be detained in an apartment of the palace,) commiſſioned his officers to inquire into the truth of the tranſactions which I had revealed: they found the wretch ſtill living: terrified at the ſight of the royal mandate, and that diſſolution which he felt approaching, he confeſſed, without reſerve, the crime which he had been about to perpetrate, and reſigned himſelf into the hands of juſtice. But the angel of death a few hours after ſummoned him to a tribunal ſtill more awful, and prevented the execution of that ſentence which an earthly judge would have inflicted.

The

The deſtruction of this unhappy criminal hung heavy upon my ſoul, and I again withdrew myſelf from the haunts of men, and retired into the gloomy receſſes of a foreſt; when Myrza filled with gratitude for the ſervices I had rendered him, ſought me in the ſolitude which I had choſen, and claſping me in his arms, poured out the effuſions of his heart in expreſſions the moſt animated and grateful. Come (ſaid he) my preſerver, and partake with me the bleſſings I enjoy: thou haſt now convinced me of the exiſtence of thoſe virtues in thy ſoul which only lay dormant for a time. Come, and let me preſent thee to my daughter, who has long ſighed in ſecret on account of the abſence of Zeibriel, and who impatiently waits to ſee him thus glorioufly reſtored to the dignity of virtue, and the eſteem of the wiſe and worthy.

A flood of rapture overpowered my ſenſes, as he ſpoke; the ſudden fluctuation of my ſpirits oppreſſed every faculty, till a torrent of tears relieved the convulſive ſtruggle, and eaſed me from ſenſations of agonizing

agonizing agitation. Proſtrate on the earth, I gave thanks to that adorable Being, whoſe providence had conducted me to happineſs through a labyrinth of error and diſtreſs. The venerable Myrza mingled his tears with mine, and with ſoothing and parental tenderneſs calmed the elevation of my ſpirits, and inſpired me with that ſerene and affecting felicity—which like the rays of the ſun beaming through a fleecy cloud, illumines without dazzling.

But alas, my children! how ſhall I paint to you thoſe ſcenes, the recollection of which awakens a train of ſenſations that ſtill too powerfully affect my ſoul? Pardon me, Almighty diſpoſer of events, if the remembrance of my former happineſs yet excites the bitterneſs of regret, and ſuſpends for a moment thoſe ſentiments of reſignation and acquieſcence which with unwearied attention I have endeavoured to attain! With the deepeſt humility I acknowledge the wiſdom and juſtice of thy diſpenſations, and though in the hour of weakneſs the frailty of nature obſcures for a

ſhort

ſhort period the divine emanations of piety and peace, yet quickly ſhall the cloud be diſperſed, and the ſublime conſolations of the Moſt High irradiate my benighted ſpirit. The good Zeibriel here pauſed, and raiſing his eyes to heaven, ſeemed abſorbed in contemplation: but after a ſhort and expreſſive ſilence, thus reſumed his narrative.

The daughter of Myrza received me with the moſt engaging frankneſs. Her father preſented me to her as a man whom he had deſtined to be her huſband: with an enchanting ſweetneſs ſhe confeſſed that ſhe ſubmitted without reluctance to his will. In the ſociety of the adorable Almerine, my days glided on in the moſt perfect peace. All nobly ingenuous, ſhe endeavoured not to conceal the ſoft emotions of her heart: I found myſelf beloved with the moſt pure and elegant tenderneſs, and my felicity was unbounded. Ah! how infinitely ſuperior are the delightful ſenſations that flow from that entire confidence, that reciprocity of affection, thoſe intereſting and delicate attentions,

tentions, that lively and vivifying fire, which animate the virtuous, the ſenſible, the truly enamoured heart—to the ſordid deſire of the ſenſualiſt, who abſorbed in groſs ſelf-love, and degraded to the level of the brute creation, is incapable of riſing into the higher, more varied, more exquiſite ſatisfactions of reaſon and intellect, that alone can renew and perpetuate pleaſure.

Thoſe attainments which are moſt worthy of the purſuit of rational beings are in the power of almoſt all mankind: in vain we ſearch for happineſs in the paths of diſſipation and irregularity; fleeting and evaneſcent, like an unſubſtantial pageant, it diſſolves at our approach. But in the real ſolid pleaſures of nature and ſocial affection, in the ſerene conſciouſneſs of a well ordered conduct, the paſſions regulated, the temper tranquillized, the reaſon rectified (if to ſuch happy diſpoſitions, oh ſon of mortality and frailty! thou canſt ever attain) are comprized the whole of human bliſs.

In a few weeks (reſumed the ſage) I became the huſband of Almerine: but the feſtivities of the nuptial celebration received a moſt ſenſible alloy from the death of the worthy Myrza, who expired ſuddenly, while his heart was dilating with pleaſure at the felicity of his children. My Almerine bent beneath the weight of this calamity—as the beauteous lily declines its ſnowy head, ſurcharged with the dews of the morning: but time, and the tender aſſiduities of attentive affection calmed by degrees the pious effuſions of filial ſorrow, and reſtored her gentle mind to its wonted tranquillity.

Happy in the poſſeſſion of each other, we quitted the city of Iſpahan, and retired to a rural receſs in a neighbouring village, where, in the converſation of my lovely bride, the improvement of the lands belonging to my eſtate, the acquiſition of ſcience, and the ſtudy of oriental philoſophy, my days glided on like the unruffled ſtream. The birth of a ſon two years after our marriage, added to our enjoyments the

new

new and ineffable emotions of parental affection. With eyes ſwimming in tears of tenderneſs, and a heart glowing with unutterable tranſport, alternately I preſſed to my boſom the ſmiling infant, and its lovely mother. But let me draw a veil over ſenſations to the expreſſion of which language is unequal! This flattering and deceitful calm was the prelude of a ſtorm, the remembrance of which congeals my blood, and thrills my ſoul with horror. Some months after the birth of my infant, being neceſſitated to go a ſhort journey, I took leave of my Almerine with a preſage which I could not account for: as I bade her farewel, an unuſual damp hung upon my ſpirits, and an univerſal tremor ſhook my nerves: with the utmoſt difficulty I at length tore myſelf from her embraces. Theſe cruel anxieties which my reaſon in vain endeavoured to ſubdue, increaſed to ſo great a degree, that on the third day of my journey, unable to proceed, I determined to return home, and loſe my inquietudes in the preſence of the beloved object, for whoſe welfare they were excited.

The

The nearer I approached the manſion, in which I had left all my ſoul held dear, my agitations became more tumultuous: at length I alighted from my horſe, and ruſhing into the houſe, was haſtening to the apartment of Almerine, when a ſervant with looks of terror and diſmay impeded my progreſs. In a moment I was ſurrounded by my domeſtics, who proſtrating themſelves at my feet, anſwered my frantic inquiries with ſighs and groans. My wife! my child! I exclaimed in a furious tone —they are no more.—Images of horror crowded on my imagination, my ſenſes ſwam in confuſion, and I fell without motion to the ground. The cries of my faithful attendants recalled me to life: amidſt a torrent of tears, they informed me, that on the ſecond day of my abſence their beloved miſtreſs had been ſeized by the hand of power, and conveyed to the Seraglio; the fame of her beauty having reached the ears of Ibrahim, (who had ſucceeded his father Selim) and whoſe fierce and licentious conduct had acquired him the ſurname of the cruel.

The traveller who in croſſing the deſart —hears the howling of the ſouthern blaſt, and ſees the ſand whirled in tremendous eddies, approaching to overwhelm him with inevitable deſtruction, ſtands not more aghaſt than I did at this dreadful intelligence. A thouſand gloomy ſchemes of deſperation and horror revolved in my perturbed mind: I retired to my cloſet, and throwing myſelf on a ſopha, remained till the dawning of the day in a ſtate of torpid inſenſibility. But at length rouſed to anguiſh, I aroſe with precipitation, and diſguiſing myſelf in the habit of a ſlave haſtened towards the city. Tortured with a variety of cruel apprehenſions, I wandered round the gardens of the Seraglio, till the lamp of day had almoſt withdrawn itſelf, its laſt rays ſcarce gilding the ſummits of the weſtern mountains, when a ſoft and plaintive murmur reached my attentive ear: I ſtarted, and flew towards the place from whence the ſound ſeemed to proceed. Again I liſtened in breathleſs attention, and fancied I could diſtinguiſh the voice of Almerine. The blood ruſhed tumultuouſly to my heart,

I gazed

I gazed on the walls which oppoſed my entrance in an agony of deſpair, and made ſeveral ineffectual efforts to ſcale them. At laſt wearied and exhauſted, I threw myſelf on the earth, and elevating my eyes to heaven, tacitly accuſed that Being who thus ſuffered the impious to triumph in the ſpoils of the innocent and oppreſſed. How long is life! (I exclaimed) and how tranſient are its felicities! A gay dream, a moment of intoxication, from which the rude hand of adverſity wakes us with an irrecoverable ſhock.

The branches of a lofty tree overſhadowed the ſpot on which I was ſitting, and part of them waved over the wall which encloſed the gardens of the Haram. It occurred to me that by the aid of theſe boughs I might be enabled to accompliſh my deſire. What muſt be thoſe difficulties which the temerity of love will not endeavour to obviate? Again the ardor of hope flufhed my cheek, and my boſom throbbed with expectation. With extreme difficulty and danger I at length attained

my purpoſe, and found myſelf within that encloſure—where ſhould I be diſcovered, inevitable death would be the reward of my preſumption. But the paſſion which animated my heart, rendered me inſenſible to fear, and armed me with a reſolution more than human. With precipitate ſteps I penetrated into a receſs, from whence ſeemed to proceed thoſe ſounds, which had at firſt excited my attention; as I drew nearer, the accents of complaint grew more diſtinct, interrupted by the moſt piercing and heart-rending ſighs. Ah my children! how ſhall I paint to you the ſtrong emotions, that agitated my ſoul, when I beheld reclining on the graſs, by the ſide of a river, that beloved object, whom torn from me by the hand of tyranny, I now perhaps gazed on for the laſt time. The roſes were faded from her cheek, and thoſe eyes—compared with whoſe luſtre the gems of Samarcand had appeared dim, were now ſuffuſed with tears, and languid with diſtreſs; raiſing them from the ground, in a tone of the moſt affecting ſorrow—cruel and deluſive imagination! (ſaid ſhe) how does thy refined and

acute

acute ſenſations add ſevere and accumulated woes to a heart already ſinking under the wounds of nature and tenderneſs! Fondly I looked forward to an unclouded proſpect: but the day ſuddenly ſhut in, enveloped with thick darkneſs, and the gay dream of delight fled for ever. A thouſand conflicting ſenſations for ſome moments deprived me of the power of utterance. At length in a voice ſcarcely articulate—Almerine! (ſaid I) —ſhe ſtarted—ſhrieked—and ſunk motionleſs in my arms. Returning to life and recollection in the ſame inſtant,—fly my Zeibriel, (ſhe exclaimed with looks of terror and diſtraction) fly from this fatal place! but a few minutes have I eſcaped from the officious cares of the women appointed to attend me, even now perhaps they are in ſearch of me. Gracious Alla; let me not be witneſs to the death of him, who is infinitely dearer to me than life itſelf! Never my loved, my loſt Almerine—never will I leave you.—Let us die together—exiſtence without you would be an inſupportable burthen: this moment, while thus ſtraining you to my heart—this moment repays me

for all I have ſuffered!—Let the tyrant condemn me to racks and tortures—in your preſence, even death would have new and attractive charms! The ſound of approaching feet aſſailed the ear of the trembling Almerine. They come, (ſhe cried) my Zeibriel, claſping me ſtill cloſer to her boſom—they come to tear me from you: Ah! leave me not—let us die together! Some women who were not far diſtant, had been witneſſes to our interview, and inſtantly alarmed the Shah, who now approached the ſpot (attended by his guards) where I ſupported in my arms the terrified, and almoſt lifeleſs Almerine.

In a furious and diſdainful accent, the tyrant commanded us to be ſeparated. As the Lybian lioneſs, when rouſed by the hunters, in defence of her young—tears both the horſe, and rider, and dyes the earth with ſanguinary torrents; ſo, animated by love and deſpair—I quitted my Almerine, and drawing my ſcimetar, ruſhed upon the ſlaves, who in vain attempted to diſarm me, and endeavoured to force my way to the Shah,

determined

determined to ſacrifice him to my juſt vengeance; but at length exhauſted by rage, and overpowered by numbers I fell, covered with wounds. My Almerine rent the air with the moſt piercing and frantic cries, and was conveyed to the Haram in a ſtate of diſtraction. The inhuman Ibrahim ordered me to be thrown into the river which ran through the gardens, and emptied itſelf into the ſea, where in a few moments I loſt my ſenſes, and was conveyed (as I afterwards learnt) by the rapidity of the ſtream near the reſidence of a pious derviſe, who drew me out of the waves, and by the application of powerful drugs reſtored me to life and ſenſation. In the firſt anguiſh of recollection I repayed his humanity and tenderneſs with ſevere and ungrateful reproaches, tore the bandages from my wounds, execrated the returning light, and obſtinately refuſed the cordials with which he preſſed me to recruit my waſted ſpirits. But at laſt overpowered by his humane ſolicitude, and incited by the prevalence of nature, I conſented to live; a glimmering ray of hope ſtill at times beaming

through the deſpondency, with which my ſoul was overwhelmed; yet tranſient and evaneſcent were its irradiations, as the flame-winged lightning, which gleaming from the Eaſt to the Weſt, is ſucceeded by a thicker and more dreadful gloom.

Recovering my ſtrength by ſlow degrees, in the abſence of my benefactor—I one day crawled out, with a hope of procuring ſome intelligence of my loſt ill-fated Almerine! I had not proceeded far, when I eſpied walking with a dejected air, a ſlave whom I had formerly purchaſed of an Arabian merchant, and who in the days of my proſperity had ſerved me with fidelity and zeal. Having diſcovered myſelf to him, I demanded of him with eagerneſs and impatience the information which my ſoul languiſhed to hear. Proſtrating himſelf at my feet, and bowing his head in the duſt—Let not my lord (ſaid he) be diſpleaſed with his ſervant, if he feels a reluctance to relate thoſe fatal truths, which if it were poſſible, he would wiſh for ever to be ſuppreſſed; yet as the knowledge of them

them imports thy life and ſafety, how cruel ſoever the taſk, there is a neceſſity that thou ſhouldſt be informed—that Almerine ſurvived but a few hours the dreadful conflict, in which it was reported thou hadſt fallen a victim.—Thy ſon alſo was conveyed by the angel of death to the bowers of Paradiſe three days after his unfortunate mother.—Thy eſtates are confiſcated—thy friends overwhelmed with conſternation—and thy ſlaves diſperſed over the face of the earth. Haſten, my lord, from a country ſo fatal to thy peace, while thy preſervation is yet undiſcovered, leſt thou again fall into the power of a remorſeleſs tyrant, and finiſh a life of ſufferings by a cruel and ignominious death.

It is well! (ſaid I) the meaſure of my ſorrows is filled up,—and the power of Omnipotence is diſplayed in my deſtruction. Take back, Oh thou Supreme Arbiter of events!—take back the life which reaſon and nature both impel me to renounce! With a wild and frantic geſture, I drew from under my veſt a poniard which

I had

I had concealed, and raiſing my eyes to heaven, with a look in which accuſation and ſupplication were blended, was about to plunge it in my boſom—when the ground ſhook under me,—the ſun was veiled in clouds—a flaſh of lightening glanced acroſs my ſtartled ſight—followed by a loud and terrific peal of thunder,—and the angel of reproof again ſtood before me. Raſh, and inſenſate mortal! (ſaid he, in a ſolemn and ſevere tone,) that Almighty Being, whoſe diſpenſations thou haſt preſumptuouſly dared to arraign, deigneth once more, to commiſſion his miniſtering ſpirit to ſpeak unto thee words of correction and inſtruction. Shall the child of mortality, the inſect of a day, abſorbed in the purſuit of ſenſible objects, and incapable of penetrating beyond the preſent hour, to whoſe perception the neareſt link of the great general chain of Providence is ſcarcely viſible,—ſhall he preſume to rebel againſt the Higheſt,—murmur at infinite goodneſs,—or direct the Omniſcient intelligence? Didſt thou ſerve him for nought, when he ſhowered upon thee

thee the bleſſings of proſperity, and thy heart dilated with joy? Softened by delight, and enervated with eaſe, thou waſt ſinking into the lap of ſecurity and pleaſure, and diſſolved in terreſtrial enjoyments, aſpired not to thoſe purer and more ſublime ſatisfactions which alone are worthy of the ſupreme attention of an heir of immortality. Thou haſt ſaid in thine heart,—ſurely integrity and virtue are vain, while the wicked triumph, and the innocent hath no avenger. But attend in ſilence, and let thy mind imbibe knowledge! The immutable and eternal laws of equity are but commencing in this firſt and imperfect ſtage of exiſtence, ſeemingly perplexed with intricacies, and obſcured with errors: yet even here, in the inmoſt ſoul, though inviſible to mortal eyes, the Almighty is not without his witneſs. The inquietudes of vice convert the exterior bleſſings of proſperity into a ſubtle and deadly poiſon: while the virtuous with tranquil equanimity riſe ſuperior to misfortune, and from the wholeſome ſoil of adverſity extract the fair bloſſoms of wiſdom, humanity, and reſignation. But the

period approaches when this ſcene—which to the ſuperficial beholder ſeems unworthy of infinite benevolence,—ſhall appear a ſyſtem of conſummate ſkill, and every cloud diſperſed, ſhine with a clear and effulgent radiance through the boundleſs ages of eternity.

Depart then, and thus taught by heaven, adore that wiſdom which is unſearchable,—confide in that goodneſs which has twice ſnatched thee from deſtruction,—and inſtructed by the paſt, let the future evince the ſincerity of thy contrition. Diffuſe the knowledge which thou haſt received, and ſpeak peace and conſolation to the children of error, and affliction.

The ſeraph here withdrew, and the ſound of his wings was as the ruſhing of a whirlwind. Humbled and abaſhed, I quitted the environs of Iſpahan, followed by my faithful attendant, and in this ſequeſtered retirement have now ſpent forty years: during that period a celeſtial peace has gradually dawned upon my benighted ſoul. May the

remembrance

remembrance of my errors guide your devious footſteps through the intricate labyrinth of life, and when the meſſenger of diſſolution ſummons me to the bliſsful abodes of the faithful, may I have the ſatisfaction of reflecting, that I have not recorded my hiſtory in vain.

No. XIX.

An INVOCATION to the NIGHTINGALE.

Written near the New Foreſt in Hampſhire.

WAND'RING o'er the dewy meadow,
Oft at evening hour I go;
Fondly courting Philomela's
Sympathetic plaints of woe.

Sometimes huſh'd in ſtill attention,
Leaning penſive o'er a ſtile;
Fancy bids her ſound deluſive,
Lull the yielding ſenſe awhile.

Soft,

Soft, the viſionary muſic
Riſing floats upon the gale;
Now it ſinks in ſtrains more languid,
Dying o'er the diſtant vale.

Starting from the dream of fancy,
Nought my liſt'ning ears invade,
Save the hum of falling waters,
Save the ruſtling aſpin-ſhade!

Little ſongſtreſs, ſooth my ſorrows,
Lull my ſoul with ſofteſt airs;
Such as erſt in "Lydian meaſures,"
Charm'd the Grecian hero's cares.

But if forced by cruel ruſtics,
To lament thy ruin'd care;
Breathe thy ſaddeſt ſtrains of anguiſh,
Strains, that melodize deſpair!

Deeply vers'd in ſorrow's leſſons,
Beſt my heart thy griefs can know;
Pity dwells within the boſom,
Soften'd by an equal woe.

Would

Would thy melancholy plainings
All my hapleſs fate renew;
Heartfelt ſighs ſhould load the Zephyr,
Tears increaſe the falling dew.

Ceaſe to ſhun me, lovely mourner,
Sweetly breathe the melting ſtrain;
Oft, thou deign'ſt to charm the ruſtic
Roving thoughtleſs o'er the plain:

Yet, to him thy ſofteſt trillings
Can no ſympathy impart;
Wouldſt thou ſeek for kindred feelings,
See them trembling in my heart!

Vain, alas! my invocation,
Vain the pleadings of the muſe!
Deep in ſilent ſhades, the charmer
Doth her tuneful lay refuſe.

Homeward as I hopeleſs wander,
Faintly ſighs the evening breeze;
Shadowy beams the moon's pale luſtre,
Glittering through the waving trees.

No. XX.

No. XX.

SONNET.

BE mine—beſide the cool tranſlucent ſtream,
Beneath the waving willows' chequer'd ſhade,
Soft, on the verdant turf ſupinely laid
To trace with extacy the Poet's theme!

Or wrapt in contemplation, fondly dream
Scenes of long-loſt delight once more diſplay'd;
While all my ſoul joy's animating beam
Illumes, in fancy's vivid tints array'd.

Then as the fading phantoms diſappear,
And anguiſh through my mind reſumes its ſway,
While riſing ſighs my penſive boſom rend,
And o'er my cheek deſcends the flowing tear,
Ah then! the ſtruggling paſſions to allay,
Be mine—the ſocial ſympathizing friend.

No. XXI.

No. XXI.

SONNET.

AH! let not hope fallacious, airy, wild,
Illuſive rays amid the tempeſt blend!
No more my ſoul with varied feelings rend,
Soft ſenſibility—refinement's child!

May apathy her wand oblivious ſpread
Steep'd in lethean waves, with poppies twin'd,
And gently bending o'er my languid head,
To long repoſe beguile a wayward mind.

While keen reflection throbs in every vein,
Thy aid oblivion, vainly I implore!
This heart ſhall tremble with the ſenſe of pain,
Till death's cold hand a laſting peace reſtore.

Ah! ſay can reaſon's feebler power controul,
The finer movements of the feeling ſoul?

No. XXII.

ODE TO A BULLFINCH.

LITTLE wanton flutterer, ſay,
Whither wouldſt thou wing thy way?
Why thoſe airy circles make?
All untried the thorny brake.
Wintry clouds deform the ſcene;
Faintly glows the ſickly green;
Piercing winds, and chilling ſhowers
Rudely blight the opening flowers:
Scarce a bloſſom dares expand,
Nipp'd by boreas' icy hand:
Slowly from her native bed
The violet rears her lovely head,
And to the northern blaſt expos'd;
Folds her leaves, ere half diſclos'd.

See the wily fowler laid
Cloſe beneath the hawthorn ſhade;
Mark his tyrannous intent,
Full on ſchemes of murder bent:
For within that rugged breaſt,
Meek-eyed pity ne'er would reſt;
Nor the ſofter powers of love,
Ere that ſtoic heart could move.

Various

Various dangers lurking lie
In the guiſe of liberty.

Little trembler, hither fly,
In my boſom ſafely lie;
Sympathy, and tenderneſs,
Do that boſom ſtill poſſeſs!
There thy gloſſy plumes unfold,
Plumes of azure, and of gold;
While ſecure from every harm,
Pining want, and rude alarm,
A willing captive ſtill remain,
Nor wiſh thy liberty to gain.

Whiſp'ring nature prompts to fly,
Seeking ſweet ſociety;
Or the gentler voice of love,
Bids thee range the mazy grove.
Ah! thy fond intent forbear,
Tranſient joys, which end in care:
All a parent's anxious woe
Soon thy downy breaſt would know,
Leſt the truant ſchool-boys eye
Should thy tender young deſcry!
Leſt the ruder vernal ſtorm,
Should thy little neſt deform!

Hither,

Hither, then thou wanton fly!
Bleſs thy ſoft captivity.
And lull with notes of ſoothing ſound,
The pangs which do my boſom wound.

FINIS.

---

10 JU 68

ERRATA.

Page 9, line 19, for *it*, read *they*.
—— 10, —— 16, for *competion*, read *competition*.
—— 11, —— 7, for *predeliction*, read *predilection*.
—— 16, —— 22, for *retrogade*, read *retrograde*.
—— 19, —— 3, for *morbed*, read *morbid*.
—— 35, —— 24, for *Belle-Letters*, read *Belles-Lettres*.
—— 92, —— 6, for *Chriſtiana*, read *Chriſtina*.